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COLD WAR AT LAKE SUCCESS

THE Yugoslav effort to secure election to the vacant Eastern European seat on the Security Council has caused a critical situation at Lake Success. Rumours of a Soviet walk-out from the United Nations, if Czechoslovakia does not receive the seat, may be discounted: with the prospect that before long the Chinese People's Republic will reinforce the Communist Bloc, the U.S.S.R. is unlikely to take a step which would make Uno the exclusive preserve of the Western Powers. At his press conference on Tuesday Mr. Vyshinsky contented himself with making it clear that the Soviet Union would regard the election of Yugoslavia as a "challenge." It would be, he said, a violation of the Charter; it would undermine the basis of the United Nations; and it would cause "serious deterioration in East-West relations."

The U.S.S.R. has no case for its present treatment of Yugoslavia, but Mr. Vyshinsky has a case against the choice of Yugoslavia for the Security Council. From its first meeting at San Francisco, it was clear that the United Nations could work successfully only if, besides its constitutional rules, there was a realistic gentleman's agreement between East and West to recognise spheres of interest. The veto was a recognition of this fact; and the same principle has held good for elections to the two-year seats on the Security Council. The Charter, it is true, states only that due regard must be given to "equitable geographical distribution." A strict reading would make Yugoslavia as eligible as Czechoslovakia for the seat vacated by the Ukraine. But it is impossible to hold that Yugoslavia is supported by a majority of the States in the region which Marshal Tito seeks to represent. Mr. Vyshinsky is entitled to remind the Assembly that the U.S.S.R. has always accepted the State Department's candidates for the American hemisphere, and has not challenged the nominations for the seat reserved for the British Commonwealth.

Unlike Mr. Acheson, Mr. Bevin seems inclined to support the Soviet case. Marshal Tito's only claim to the seat is that, having broken with the Russians, Yugoslavia's election would provide additional security for his regime. But, surely, if there is a threat to peace in the Balkans, it would not be diminished by the election of Yugoslavia to the Council. If the Council is to be successful in preserving world peace, it must combine the roles of arbiter and conciliator. It cannot do this if it is packed by one side or the other. Its composition must genuinely reflect the balance of power.

The Stakes at Hongkong

With Canton, Amoy and Swatow in Communist hands, the Liberation Army's advance-guard is now standing on the mainland frontier of the British leased territories, separated today from the rest of China by a wrecked bridge at the border town of Shumchun. This brings measurably nearer the day when the British Government can no longer avoid facing the question whether it intends at all costs to hold on to Hongkong. Hitherto our policy has taken the form of a not unreasonable political gamble. By heavily reinforcing the garrison we have hoped to lessen the risk of an internal uprising on the part of a Communist fifth column, and we have confronted Mao Tse-tung's administration with the fact that the conquest of Hongkong would be a military operation of serious magnitude. Since there is no evidence to support the view that the Chinese Communists want either to start a third world war over Hongkong or to forgo entirely commercial contacts with the Western world, British tactics in increasing the stakes at Hongkong had something to be said for them. But the gamble is unlikely to end in our favour unless we make good use of the stronger bargaining position which, it can be argued, we have now secured. With its vulnerable water supply, Hongkong is ultimately indefensible against military siege; and, without access to the hinterland, the Colony is an economic liability rather than an asset. In these circumstances, as an alternative to drifting into a situation in which considerations of prestige on both sides become a fatal bar to a rational settlement, it seems clear that the wise policy for the British Government is to recognise the People's Republic of China without delay, and, a basis for formal conversations thus established, to discover on what terms genuine British interests in Hongkong can be preserved—to Chinese as well as our benefit.

No Truce in Greece

Contrary to first misleading reports, the Greek rebels have not declared an end to their resistance and have not laid down their arms. All they have done is to issue a communiqué wisely, if belatedly, admitting what everyone knows to be true—that they took a beating on the Grammos and Vitsi mountains this year. The main body of the guerillas—variously estimated at between seven and ten thousand men—has lived to fight another day, while the partisan war of tip-and-run continues as before in most provinces of continental and insular Greece. The war, in other words, is not at an end. Nor does the Athens General Staff, tellingly enough, say that it is. Sometime soon, and probably next spring, the partisan groups will coalesce once again, part or all of the main body of rebels will filter back across the

frontiers of Albania (where most of them now presumably are), and the stage will be set for another year of war. Strong, far-seeing and generous behaviour by the Government in Athens could avert this. They have gained at least a breathing space. The rebels are not now a serious threat to their tenure. Unhappily, the Athens Government is incapable by itself of taking the steps that might lead to peace. It is to-day little more that a vengeful and corrupt oligarchy. If the breathing space afforded by the temporary disengagement of the main rebel forces is to be used for the cause of democracy and peace, and not merely to rivet the dictatorship of Athens still more firmly to the Greek people, the United Nations must take upon itself a new responsibility. It must sponsor and supervise the conditions of peace. These, at a minimum, would include a genuine amnesty, disbandment of the rebels and surrender of their armament, a removal of Right-wing terrorists from the army and police, the restoration of civil rights, and a general election held in the presence of United Nations' observers.

Verdict on Communists

All the Communist leaders, who have been on trial in New York for the past nine months, have been found guilty of conspiracy. Their offence was the re-formation of the American Communist Party in 1945, after the rejection of Earl Browder's revisionism. This, the jury found, was a conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. Government by force or violence and was thus a violation of the Smith Act. Each member of the American Politbureau was charged for his part, as an individual, in the "conspiracy." The prosecution sought to establish its case by various means, using quotations from Communist publications and, especially, evidence of ex-Communist informers and police spies. It claimed that, despite the concern of the Communists with day-to-day issues, such as civil rights and wage problems, they were in fact preparing against the day of depression or war when, if they were strong enough, they would attempt to seize power. The defendants chose to base their case on three points: that the trial was an unconstitutional witch-hunt; that they were sincere democrats; and that their criticisms of American policy, which were made at length, were wholly justified. The point at issue became one of ultimate intent. Would the American Communists, if they got the chance, resort to revolutionary tactics? The court held that they would. But the prosecution never succeeded in showing, in the phrase of Justice Holmes, that there is "a clear and present danger" to American society. There is a conflict here between the right to dissent, even to revolutionary dissent, and the doctrine of the Smith Act. Will the Supreme Court, which is chary of making basic constitutional decisions, be prepared to try to resolve this conflict? But in the meantime, the danger is that this trial and verdict will be taken as the signal for a general witch-hunt just when there were signs that the peak of the anti-Communist hysteria had been passed. All social criticism may now be hampered. And that danger to American democracy may be more important than the alleged menace of the individuals arraigned in this New York trial.

The Sterling Debts

Among the "consequential problems" arising out of devaluation, that of Britain's indebtedness to India, Pakistan, Egypt and other members of the sterling group seems likely to loom increasingly large. The Economic Commission for Europe, in a report issued last week, argues that, to reap the benefits of devaluation, Britain will have to impose narrower limits on the volume of unrequited exports financed through reduction of creditors' sterling balance. Certainly, if we continue to allow India and other sterling creditors to draw on their balances at the present rate of over £150 million a year, shortage of goods in this country and a resulting inflationary trend of prices will be intensified. Moreover, this pull on British exports will militate against the willingness and ability of exporters to step up sales in dollar markets. On the other hand, Dr. Matthai, the Indian Finance Minister, has announced bluntly that India would resist by every means in her power any proposal to scale down Britain's debt to her; and there would probably be strong objections raised from India to much downward revision of the present drawing agreements, which in any case run until next June. There has been talk of the United States being asked to take over (presumably at a substantial discount, to which our creditors might demur) some part of these sterling balances. The consequences, however, of such a step would clearly have to be weighed most carefully, even if it were to be assumed that the U.S. Congress, in its present mood of retrenchment, would be willing to assume this additional burden. In the first place, though unrequited exports mean shorter supplies to the British consumer, they are an important factor in making good the promise of "full employment." Secondly, though some American manufacturers would, no doubt, welcome the chance of access to markets now restricted by lack of dollars, the question has to be faced whether Britain can afford to expose her trade with India to privileged American competition for the sake of shifting to American shoulders some portion of her sterling indebtedness. Finally, there is the question of India herself to be considered. However attractive might be the prospect of unrequited imports from the U.S.A., would India's increased dependence on American supplies be compatible with the neutrality in the political cold war which Pandit Nehru has so boldly affirmed?

Oil and Dollars

O.E.E.C., it appears, has reaffirmed the European plans for the development of oil refineries that came under hot attack from the American oil interests during the recent Washington discussions; but no progress has been made in the export talks under E.C.A. auspices that were then instituted between the British and American representatives. Oil at present accounts for about $700 millions of Great Britain's dollar deficit, and other European countries are similarly affected. The American companies complain that if Great Britain and the other countries concerned develop refining capacity on anything like the scale proposed, there will be a big world surplus of capacity and American refined oil will be practically excluded from the European market. The British and the other European countries answer that they cannot hope to eliminate their dollar deficits without refining their own oil and thus saving the huge dollar expenditure involved. The American oil lobby is very powerful and quite ruthless, and it is arguing that the loss of the European oil trade would wreck the whole position of the United States in the Middle East, whence most of the American-controlled oil for export to Europe would come. As appeared very plainly in the Washington Tripartite Meeting, the American Government dare not, even if it could, throw the oil interests overboard; but as against this neither Great Britain nor the other countries affected can give up their plans for building their own refineries and thus saving dollars in accordance with the intentions of the Marshall Plan. It is a very pretty illustration of the conflict of interests which is never far below the surface when general exhortations to economise have to be translated into concrete terms affecting powerful interests.

Nuts or Sunflowers?

The abandonment of the attempt to grow ground-nuts at Kongwa, in Tanganyika—one of the three areas assigned for this purpose—comes as no surprise. It remains to be seen whether the change-over to sunflowers will meet with better success; for the result will depend largely on the bees, and there are fears that they may have been driven away by the clearing operations undertaken with a view to producing ground-nuts. The decision does not at present affect the other two areas included in the original scheme; but their future must be regarded as uncertain. Kongwa, as the most accessible site, was the field on which the first stage of the experiment was mainly concentrated; and the failure there is admittedly a serious matter. The Overseas Food Corporation announces that its main efforts will now be concentrated on the Southern Province, which is much the biggest of the three areas, and has quite different soil and climatic conditions. So far the total net yield of the entire project has been a minus quantity, the tonnage raised having been less than the seed planted. It is, however, much too soon to write off the African ground-nut scheme as a failure. Its cost has been far above the estimate, and no one pretends that the obstacles in the way of its success have yet been nearly overcome. But it may in the long run still turn up trumps, for the Africans as well as for a world badly short of edible fats. Even were it to end in failure, it would still have been well worth trying; for the African continent is surely destined to become some day a great food producing area, and even a costly failure might yield its full value in lessons learned.

How Much Coal?

It looks as if the Government will have to do some hard thinking about coal, and reach a firm decision as to next year's output target. Mr. Gaitskell, in his talk last week with members of the Coal Board and the N.U.M., emphasised once again the need for higher production: much more coal, he said, could be sold abroad if output were greater. The Minister, however, does not have expert opinion wholly with him. Exports of Ruhr and Polish coal are increasing rapidly; and in Belgium, where stocks on hand are rising, there is already some unemployment of miners. The argument is therefore being put forward—for instance by Professor Beacham in a paper which he presented to the British Association—that British coal policy should be no longer to concentrate on maximum output but to secure lower prices by closing uneconomic mines and reducing the labour force in the coal fields. Does the Coal Board share this view? It certainly appears to be relaxing its efforts to recruit more workers for the industry. There are now barely 710,000 miners on colliery books, as compared with 725,000 a year ago and a man-power target for 1949 of 736,000. Even the number of face workers, which was to have risen by 14,000 during the year, has fallen instead by nearly 2,000. It is high time that the miners were told authoritatively whether future output targets are to be scaled downwards and, if so, what is to be done about redundancy. This year's improvement in output per manshift—3 per cent. at the face and 4½ per cent. over all—is unlikely to be maintained if the impression gains ground that extra effort may mean "working oneself out of a job."

PARLIAMENT : "Will We, Won't We . . ."

Wednesday

ASKED when he thought the General Election should take place, B. W., Trade Unionist, 64, replied, "I don't give a damn." And joined the other six Labour M.P.s listening to the debate on the New Forest Bill. (His majority at the last election was 27,000.) J. P., a retired Tory business-man, 71, was of the opinion that the election should be held as late as possible next year. His constituency hadn't readopted him.

But these were eccentric cases, and most Members, enjoying less local confidence than B. W. or more local confidence than J. P., were more exercised than either by the twofold problem of how to hold their seats and save the country. Labour Members who had spent the days before reassembly in their constituencies were agreed. The working-class was with the Government against the Tories; meetings were like those of 1945—big, attentive audiences with few questioners. "When should we have a General Election?" said G. N., another Trade Unionist, 43. "Last week." If the Labour Party were only concerned with power, the large numbers of M.P.s who a short time ago had wanted a November election would have been justified. Full employment plus a crisis still equals a Labour victory.

What then prompted the Prime Minister's decision not to have an election this year? That was Tuesday's chief subject of discussion among Labour Members outside the Chamber. The majority who supported the Government's view combined party expediency with public morality. "We must not appear to take a short-term Party advantage of the devaluation device. . . . We must prove to the nation that we are ready to face difficulties honestly, to enjoy its trust on the merits of our case, and to carry the burden of Government through the winter. Besides," they said, "the Party Machine won't be ready till next spring." J. B., a Labour solicitor, 37, summed up the case for the Machine: "My blocks aren't ready. I can't go to the country without my picture." Up and down the country, from the sub-agents to Transport House, a wail had gone up: "My blocks aren't ready."

Here we have a chiasmus. The Tory Machine, all ready to fight, challenges, through the Leader, the Labour Machine which, less ready, declines. But the Labour tacticians, knowing that victory is now in their grasp, urge a November election. The Tory tacticians, preferring not to fight on the issue of full employment, requiring rather that the Labour Party should bear the odium of winter-cuts, now state through their Leader that they are ready to fight next Spring instead. From a purely electoral point of view, the Tories have the better machine; the Socialists have the better policy. Both expect that the other's advantage will fade. Neither, therefore, is unduly disturbed by the postponement.

Yet there are transcending national considerations. M. A., a Scottish woman Socialist, 41, said, "I'm for a Spring election. If we had an election now, they'd say we were running away from things." On the other hand, J. E., an accountant, 47, said, "I'm doubtful about it—in the national interest. The Prime Minister wanted to restore confidence by postponing the election. But he has merely lengthened the period of uncertainty." T. C., another Scottish Member, a Co-operator, 57, said glumly, "Just marking time." A more detailed objection came from P. W., an insurance expert, 47, who said, "It's no use going to the country with a programme that's still only half-baked. Take our insurance policy. It's still undefined. Let's get our programme clear by the Spring."

On the Tory side, the full attendance of their front-bench on Tuesday made them look like a gathering of relatives waiting for the will to be read. Already some of them, on the principle of "Why wait to inherit?" are behaving as though they were already in power. Like Mr. Dewey. But on the whole, they think it as well to wait till next Spring. They will wear black throughout the crisis. They will look solemn as the Government introduces its sable winter measures. But when the sap rises in April, the Tory resurrection-men expect to rise with it.

MAURICE EDELMAN

TORY AND SOCIALIST RETRENCHMENT

DEVALUATION has had one striking effect on political controversy: it has made retrenchment the common theme of Government and Opposition. To the *Economist*, Sir John Anderson and a few daring Tory back-benchers retrenchment has always meant a reduction in the workers' standard of living. Now, Labour, though still rejecting this line of argument, agrees that some retrenchment there must be.

At the Empress Hall, last week, this change was heralded as a victory for Tory statesmanship; but this interpretation is acceptable only to those whose memories are extremely short. Ever since 1945, the Opposition has confined its advocacy of "cuts" to generalities and opposed, not only in speech but in the Division Lobbies, every specific measure of austerity. Even to-day the hoardings are covered with posters telling us that, under the Tories, the builder would be free to build each of us the house he needs, although Mr. Churchill is calling for cuts in the social services and capital investment. Nor should it be forgotten that the *Right Road for Britain* was a deliberate effort to outbid the Socialists by promises of still further extensions in the social services. Mr. Butler was obviously relieved last Friday to state that such extensions are now impossible. He realises that the time for denigrating Socialist austerity is past. Instead of blaming the Labour Government for driving down the standard of living, the Conservative Party must now accuse it of maintaining an artificially high standard with the aid of American dollars; and the caricature of "Austerity Cripps" must now be replaced by a new picture of "Cripps the Spendthrift."

This makes it important to analyse the precise meaning of "retrenchment". Mr. Churchill made it clear enough in his keynote speech that in his view its function is to reduce the burden of taxation. By increasing the proportion of profits which the business community can retain, he would provide incentives for higher production. As Mr. Eccles rightly showed in the devaluation debate, the logical consequence of this policy would be the ending of the wage freeze, the reduction of food subsidies and a general free fight between capital and labour for their respective shares of the national cake. In other words, having devalued we should re-enact the complete programme of MacDonaldism.

The odd thing about this argument is that it completely neglects the lesson of history. The 1931 crisis, and the sacrifices it imposed on the poorer classes, did not produce higher productivity. On the contrary, the 1930's were notable for the steady increase of restrictive practices by both sides of industry. Unemployment merely made the worker more determined than ever to resist efforts to increase his productivity; and the employing class, through trade associations and cartels, doggedly tried to maintain profits by restricting output.

But if the Labour Government rejects the Tory argument for a purely deflationary retrenchment, what sort of retrenchment does it envisage? How can Mr. Attlee avoid being dragged, however reluctantly, along the path that MacDonald trod? The first part of the answer is clear enough. The purpose of the cuts now under discussion is not to make possible "incentive" reductions in next year's Budget. On the contrary, in view of the increased austerity which devaluation will bring to the working class, it will be necessary at all costs to prevent the increased profits, available as a result of the cheaper pound, from being squandered in distributed dividends. The natural tendency of devaluation is to make the rich richer and the poor poorer, and this must be ruthlessly checked by fiscal policy, if "fair shares for all" are to be preserved. For this purpose, what is needed is not only a much larger Budget surplus, but, as we argued last week, a capital levy. For gross inequalities in personal expenditure to-day are due less to differences in earned income than to the use of capital by the rich to maintain their standard of living. A capital levy would simultaneously reduce the burden of the national debt and check the inflationary tendencies which are bound to result from the diversion of goods from the home market. The only alternative to Tory deflation, in fact, is a far more drastic move towards social equality than any yet undertaken.

It is only as part of this much larger fiscal policy that retrenchment can be acceptable to the Labour movement. Mr. Attlee must resolutely refuse to listen to the voices which tell him that productivity can only be increased if business men are allowed to spend much more of their profits on themselves. His whole effort must be centred on steering the Welfare State through the storm. Mr. Churchill's formula of salvation is to abandon ship and take to the boats of deflation. Mr. Attlee may be forced to jettison some of the cargo; but, if so, the purpose will be that of saving the ship.

Now, what can be jettisoned without risking disaster? It is difficult to see how we can cut the housing programme without increasing the immobility of labour, which is one of the main obstacles to the success of the export drive. The programme for school and hospital building and such capital investment as the plans for electrification may have to be somewhat retarded; but even here an injudicious zeal could easily threaten our recovery as well as our welfare.

The best field for retrenchment is undoubtedly in the Defence Estimates, which up till now have been treated as something sacred. This indeed is the key issue on which the future of the Welfare State may well depend. This year, although the cost of rearmament has scarcely been felt, we shall have spent nearly £800 millions on the armed forces, a quarter of the Budget. Unless the rearmament plans are drastically scaled down, and the Government's foreign commitments reviewed with the same severity as its home commitments, there is no prospect of preventing the gradual but inexorable dismantling of the Welfare State. We cannot do away with conscription with a stroke of the pen, but a decision progressively to dispense with it could be taken at once. Completed over a period of years, it would bring savings of up to £150 millions annually. Even more important, the Cabinet should set a ceiling on the cost of Defence as firm as that they have already set on the food subsidies. If the Chiefs of Staff then say, as they are bound to, that they cannot sustain the commitments laid on them by the Foreign Office, those commitments must be reviewed.

Finally, it is important to remember that for a Socialist Government retrenchment is no more a solution than devaluation. Both are expedients, adopted in dangerous times. The real long-term solutions are to be found in external policy. When we feel overwhelmed by the problem of increasing production so as to bridge the dollar gap, it is wholesome to recall that Britain is carrying a Canadian crisis as well as her own. If, instead of patiently paying dollars for Canadian wheat, we cancelled our contract in 1950, Canada would be

broke. Equally, a Canadian agreement to become even partially a sterling country would improve our position more than any increase of home production could possibly do. It is not true, however often the Tories repeat it, that our difficulties are all matters of discipline and incentive on board the ship. The storm outside has something to do with our problem; and what will determine our survival is not the load we carry but the course we steer.

NEW PHASE IN FRANCE

THE politics of French coalition government are not unlike a simple electrical mechanism. No sooner is the circuit of agreement closed than the same forces which have closed it seem at once to operate to cause a break; and so on, back and forth, without much hurt to the components, for years and years. Yet something more than the usual make-and-break of party manœuvre lies behind the fall of Queuille and the failure of Jules Moch to rebuild a Coalition. This something more suggests that the Fourth Republic has entered a new phase. In the phase that is ended the parties of the middle class succeeded in excluding the Communists (and that means, as things stand at present, most organised French workers) from any share in the making and execution of policy, but failed to break the unity of the C.G.T. and the Communist Party, or to reduce the strength and striking-power of either. This qualified success has brought about a kind of stalemate. The question which is now to be asked is whether this pause, this stagnation, fatal to good government but justifiable, perhaps, if it can give rise to good government, is to be "won" by the middle-class parties or by the Communists. It is still very much an open question.

The evidence for believing that there is something especially significant about the present crisis is clear enough. Let us recapitulate a little. The "Grand Coalition" of the Resistance lasted, at least formally, until May, 1947. The Communists, until then, had a large share in Government; towards the end they even held, if somewhat nominally, the Ministry of National Defence, where M. Billoux and a few friends sat in splendid isolation and glowered at the General Staff, but achieved little more, it seems, than a sense of acute frustration. Then, in May, there came an end to that phase. None too soon, perhaps, since the Coalition had split up, amoeba-like, into two or three rival governments, administrations, and systems of patronage. The Communists, true enough, would evidently have preferred to stay in the Coalition, but for two things. The first was their opposition to the war against the Viet-Minh, in Indo-China, which the Socialists, somewhat *à contre-cœur*, had now decided they must continue to support; and the second, still more compelling, was their unwillingness to oppose wage demands now rising in a powerful chorus from within their own ranks.

Having got the Communists out, the next thing was to keep them out. And this proved comparatively easy. To begin with, there was the Marshall offer of a month later, opening, as it did, the promise of a veritable cornucopia of "unrequited imports," and thus the hope that "genuine recovery"—a mysterious phrase much used at that time—might soon rob the Unions (and the Communists) of their case. Once that happened, it was argued, the good French workman would turn away from Moscow and become an honest patriot again. Then, with Marshall Aid on the way, there was the comparative failure of the great strikes of November and December, 1947—when Jules Moch made his name as a strike-breaker on the grand scale—and the formation of *Force Ouvrière*. With Jouhaux to lead it, this breakaway from the C.G.T. seemed full of promise. Funds were apparently forthcoming from the American Federation of Labour, if not also from Transport House, and there was talk of great things.

Both Socialists and Communists recognised that much would turn upon the fate of *Force Ouvrière*. If the Socialists could manage to win over a substantial following from the C.G.T., they would have secured again what they had lost under Vichy—their claim to be a party of the working class. If they could not manage to do that, on the contrary, their position would rapidly become indistinguishable from that of the Conservative parties. They would have ceased, in theory as well as in fact, to be Socialists.

The Conservatives, meanwhile, were not standing still. Marshall Aid was having its effect in other ways. While the Socialists turned with the urgency of desperation to detaching, if they could, the Unions from their Communist allegiance, the Right-wing parties were hard at work behind their backs. The first great economic change to follow the Marshall Plan in France was the transfer of control of the economic Ministries from the Socialists to the Radicals, from *dirigisme* to "free enterprise." It may be that André Philip, the principal apostle of *dirigisme*, had failed to check the continuing inflation or to bring much order out of the prevailing confusion. He and his friends at least had known the need and duty to share the burdens of recovery among all classes of the population. But the Radical who followed him, the well-known international banker, René Mayer, had a different approach. What he did, substantially, was to remove controls right and left, helter-skelter, and thus intolerably to sharpen the division between the trading and investing class and the wage and salary earner. Just at that very moment when the Socialists were making their utmost effort to split the Trade Unions in their favour, their friends in the Government—delighted for the rest by this particular direction of Socialist energies—were making it quite impossible that the effort should succeed.

"We have our own men in the Government," ran the propaganda of *Force Ouvrière*: "Support us; and we, through them, will see that your demands are listened to." But René Mayer, asked for a little wage concession here and there, maintained that he would rather resign. The year 1948, accordingly, was one of growing contrast—between the wretchedness and poverty of the workers and fixed income groups, and the ebullient extravagance of all who could trade and play around with capital.

By the middle of 1948, not surprisingly, the hopes of *Force Ouvrière* were practically dead. Its organisers had worked hard and had spent the money they were given or could raise from their own ranks; but the results were nothing. *Force Ouvrière* had begun by removing from the C.G.T. those few Unions, mostly of clerical workers mixed with a few old Syndicalists to give them courage and a queer revolutionary tinge, which had always fought the Communists. Nine months later it consisted of little more than these. Nine months later again, in the summer of 1949, even these were saying that they would prefer common action with the C.G.T.—with the Communists, that is—to a wage-freeze which meant in practice a steady fall in the standard of living. Little more than two years after the inception of the Marshall Plan, the Communists thus came within sight of regaining that unity of Trade Union action upon which they have built their whole case. Score, as far as the Communists are concerned, one-all: the Right-wing parties had improved their position, the Communists had conserved theirs. The Socialists, unhappily, had lost in both directions. They had lost their standing in the Government by losing control of the economic Ministries; and they had failed to improve their standing in the Unions because, having no control of economic policy, they could offer nothing but a one-sided austerity. The wage-freeze was to continue, because higher wages would mean inflation; but higher profits, of course, could not possibly be cut because, *vide* M. Mayer, this would undermine initiative.

None of this is to say that the Socialists' choice of action since 1947 was obvious or easy. To have gone into the wilderness with the Communists would have meant risking engulfment and certain estrangement from their friends and allies abroad—especially in Britain. But, in this new phase now opening, with the economic policies of France deliberately anti-Socialist, their attitude seems to call for reconsideration. If they have lost ground in the past few years, it is not because the French people are yearning for revolutions of the Right or of the Left—on the contrary, the evidence suggests strongly that they are yearning for stability and peace—but because the Socialist Party has become compromised in the eyes of its electorate with a Coalition which has become essentially a Coalition of the Right. If, as seems likely, the present uneasy stalemate continues for a little longer, the duty of the Socialists would seem to be to use this chance to re-establish their claim to be a party of the working class. Then, when economic difficulties bring that stalemate to an end, and the situation becomes once again charged with the threat of violent change, the Socialists will have a good chance of standing their ground and of winning new ground. To have taken over leadership of this Conservative Coalition which is now seeking a new Prime Minister could not have helped them. It might fatally have injured them. What they have now to consider afresh is whether they will not do better, in preparing for political battles in the future, to leave the Government and to campaign, on a straight and uncompromised programme of Social-Democracy, in the more bracing atmosphere of opposition.

STILL TRYING

I HAVE now attended two Union Movement meetings addressed by Sir Oswald Mosley in the Kensington Town Hall, the only town hall in London which he has so far managed to secure. At the first of these meetings, in January 1949, Sir Oswald played to the gallery: his aim was to "greet old friends," justify his wartime policy and protest against his detention, and whip up race hatred by attacks on the Jews, taking the Stanley business as a peg. This week's meeting was a relatively restrained affair and Mosley's speech, which could almost be called the outlining of a policy, gave a better opportunity for estimating just what, beyond anti-Semitism and hysteria, is his appeal to his audience. For this audience—though the sentimental old ladies, retired colonels, South Kensington Poles, and flash young men bored with their jobs were all well represented—also contained a fair sprinkling of ordinary people of the small shopkeeper type—the kind who trail from party to party and sometimes Church to Church seeking an explanation of why things are such hard going.

There are, I think, two elements, which at a certain point coalesce. First is the "policy" elaborated in some detail. It consists of a plea

for a United Europe: based on the efficient joint exploitation of Africa—it is to be once more a Great Power able to defy Bolshevism and reject American aid. After shouting, "India gone — Burma gone — Ceylon gone — Ireland gone," Mosley tells his listeners that Africa represents an unlimited market and an unlimited source of food and raw materials, which the "small men" of the "old parties" are too stupid and timid to exploit or even to see. In partnership with the other colony-owning nations, together with Germany and Italy, we can build a third Empire grander than the two we have thrown away. Thus we can give our people and Europe a new hope and vision, as well as a rising standard of living. As for the Africans, Mosley denies in passing that he favours sweated labour, but his constant references to low output costs and his contempt for the Negroes (he accuses the old parties of "waiting till the juju-men are ready to take over") indicate that he does not expect his audience to take much interest in African well-being. Moreover, he greatly exaggerates Africa's potentialities as a market, ignores its mineral shortages, and is unrealistically optimistic about doing the job without American money.

This, however, isn't the point. As I looked at the faces around me, I saw that persuading the audience that Mosley alone has a real policy is only half the trick. The other half is to make each eager youngster envisage himself, suitably clad in khaki shorts and topee and carrying a whip or revolver, striding managerially across a vast plantation where countless black backs bend in rhythm. Mosley restores the psychological outlet which India and Burma for 150 years provided for the spirited younger sons of the British middle class. Even the ageing shopkeeper and the dear old lady see themselves as vicarious rulers of a new empire. The applause now reaches stormy heights—though not the same heights as greet Mosley's demand for the restoration of Germany's lost lands.

To Mosley, the idea of reunion with Germany is paramount, and this is reinforced by his unrepentant conviction that from 1939-45 we fought a "war of brothers." The other main strand in his thinking is the domination of Africa along White supremacy lines, with a predominantly Anglo-German Herrenvolk. Even in the 1930's Mosley's links with South Africa's Ossewabrandtag and with extremists like Pirow were notorious. To-day, he wants to join hands with Malan. His aim is a "Master" Europe based on an Africa ruled in "Master" style. Here enters the second element in the appeal. This is the age-old cult of the Superman, the Hero. Mosley, of course, is the chief Hero. The tawdry imitation of the Nuremberg Rally technique sets the stage. Stewards, uniformly clad in white shirt, black tie, and flash-of-lightning tie-clip, line the walls. Six flag-bearers and two drummers, to the bellowed commands of an ex-sergeant-major, march up the aisles and stand throughout on the platform. Mosley enters dramatically, alone, and, chairman-less, plunges into his seventy-minute speech (all learnt by heart) as soon as the cheering dies away. His climaxes are greeted with Hitler salutes and chants of "M-O-S-L-E-Y—Mosley!" Another aspect of the Hero, again closely modelled on Hitler, was revealed when one of the flag-bearers fainted after standing for 45 minutes. Mosley moved across the platform to him. My impression was that Mosley's expression was one of disgust; but a middle-aged woman in my row sighed lovingly as she breathed: "Ah, look, he's going to him."

But Mosley is only Hero Number One. We are all Heroes. Here are the phrases which really whipped up enthusiasm: "This idea lives—it is coming as sure as we are here tonight!" "We are a dedicated *élite*, marching onward conscious of the destiny we serve!" "Suffering and enduring, we come up stronger, finer, HARDER!" (Echoing cries of "Yes, harder!") "Our people are stronger, braver, superior to any other on the face of the earth!" And Mosley's final words, drowned in the shouting as he sinks in dramatic exhaustion into a great winged throne, are, ". . . onward . . . marching . . . marching . . ."

Mosley is a bitter, disappointed, frustrated man. He deeply resents his rejection by his country, and reacts by self-praise and hatred. He refers in seared tones to his detention, which now in Union circles is a myth comparable to Landsberg Fortress in Hitler's career, and contrasts it with his fighting service in the First World War. He lives, to a large extent, in the past. He speaks of Britain's old imperialist glories and seems unable to understand why they have faded. He devotes the first twenty minutes of his speech to a comparison between the Britain of 1914 and that of 1949, evoking nostalgia among his older listeners. One leaves the meeting half angry and half smiling at this almost pathetic man whom history has passed by.

The British are not a bitter or a disappointed people; we are people who adjust ourselves to facts and resist easy solutions. Yet it is well to be aware of the appeal Mosley makes. We do not know, as the economic horizon grows more murky, how many of us may in the coming years feel disappointment and frustration. This week's *Union*, beneath a banner headline, exploits the sacking of a thousand shipyard workers at Jarrow. If history is to pass Mosley and his supermen by for good and all, the making of that history is in our hands.

MERVYN JONES

A LONDON DIARY

THE atmosphere of the Conservative Conference was, I thought, well conveyed by a friend who said that the audience, waiting in a patient queue for the Churchill show, was entertained for three days by a succession of pavement orators. Only a few of the buskers were able to make them forget that the seats of the Empress Hall are hard. Anthony Nutting rang the carillon of Empire with real success; on this point the Beaverbrook theme is more popular than either European Union, grudgingly adopted, or Anglo-American partnership. The Conference lionised Mr. Bulbrooke, a declassed proletarian whose language delightfully shocked some prim ladies in the stalls. Some Young Conservatives were enthusiastic, but there were few signs of the crusading spirit which is supposed to have seized the Tories. In view of all the Labour talk about the backwardness of Transport House organisation it was ironic to hear the Tory delegates telling one another depressing stories of financial difficulties, poor organisation and rank-and-file apathy. When Mr. Churchill's speech came it did little to change this mood. The Leader was not in good form. He seemed not altogether to have recovered from Aneurin Bevan's speech during the devaluation debate. He was on the defensive, and divided his speech between an attempt to answer the charge that Tory rule would mean mass unemployment and an attempt to get good excuses on the record in case this forecast proved correct. His speech reminded me of the American Senator, burlesqued in a Hollywood film. His campaign slogan ran: "I am not for inflation. I am not for deflation. I am for flation." If Mr. Churchill had said the same thing last Friday night, I suspect that the County would have applauded it as heartily as it did some similar pearls of wisdom.

* * *

If additional reason were needed to cast doubt upon the Rajk trial, it is provided by the evidence of Count Michael Karolyi. He has a long and honourable record as an anti-Fascist. Declared an "enemy" by Horthy he was a "Popular Front" leader throughout the period of the Nazis and the Spanish war. When the revolutionary Hungarian Government wanted an ambassador for Paris, Karolyi was a natural choice. He seems first to have fallen foul of the Hungarian Government during the Mindzenty trial when he defended the Hungarian Government against a charge of disregarding civil liberties. He was told by Budapest that he should not have made any such defensive answer to the protests of the Western Powers; he should have just told them not to interfere in Hungarian business. He was also told that the Government had ended its policy of tolerance and embarked on its phase of proletarian dictatorship. He visited Budapest and resigned his post. After returning to Paris, he protested against Rajk's arrest and, after his conviction, pressed for a new trial on the ground that his confession could not possibly be true. He had excellent reasons for knowing it contained errors, because so far from Rajk having helped Sulyok, former Chairman of the Hungarian Freedom Party, to escape (as Rajk confessed), Karolyi knew that it was Rajk himself who had refused to grant Sulyok's passport, in spite of a promise given personally by Rakosi. Count Karolyi vouches for these facts from his own knowledge, based on an interview with Mr. Rakosi. For thus daring to expose one item in Rajk's confession, Count Karolyi has graduated from a patriotic servant of the Hungarian People's Democracy to becoming a tool of "the reactionaries and Imperialists."

* * *

Nothing could better reveal the mood of Dr. Malan's supporters than the resolutions which were put down for the Nationalist Party congress in the Transvaal last month. They rant and rave against everyone who dares to protest against unfettered White supremacy or tries to make life a little more tolerable for the wretched Africans. Is there a feeding scheme for coloured children? Abolish it. Are Africans paid too much? Cut their wages. Ban their meetings. Submit them to a curfew. Bar them from all public service, from treatment by White doctors, even from owning dogs. What of the Indian minority? Why, harry that too, repatriate it, deny it all rice save that imported directly from India, drive it into special reservations. As for trouble-makers, such as the Rev. Michael Scott, deport them, imprison them, ban their organisations. These themes run through most of the five hundred resolutions. It would be bad enough if the Nationalists were only a virulent minority. But they intend to do these things and nobody seems capable of stopping them. The *apartheid* or segregation policy is already being applied vigorously and there is worse to come. Every week now brings me moving letters from South Africa, describing fresh examples of beastliness. The latest is from the *Rand Daily Mail*, where a correspondent describes watching a party of white youths throwing stones at coloured children on their way to school! Is it too late for the many humane White people in South Africa to check

the advance of Fascism? Before long, I expect to hear of papers suppressed, Trade Unions banned and critics jailed.

* * *

I doubt whether so distinguished a party of German politicians has ever visited this country as that which has been staying at Wilton Park, the Foreign Office University for Germans which developed out of a wartime experiment in re-educating prisoners of war. The present gathering includes a bevy of Ministers and Minister-Presidents, six M.P.s, a batch of editors and Civil Servants. I spent an evening there as one of a Brains Trust of eight British editors, and learnt afterwards from a friend who was there next day what had chiefly interested our German listeners. They were, it seems, astonished to find that, irrespective of our political loyalties, we all agreed that Labour stood a very good chance in the coming election. This appears to have been a staggering revelation. All of them, including the Socialists, had been convinced that Britain is bankrupt, Socialism a total failure and the Labour Government on its last legs and merely waiting to be pushed out of the ring by Mr. Churchill. When they found that their own newspapers and the British and American officials, who are their only contact in Germany with the outside world, had given them the wrong impression, their reaction was violent and extremely illuminating. "Duped again," said a Minister-President to my friend. "It just shows that one can't believe anything"; and he proceeded to inquire whether the editors had really said what they meant or whether they had been acting on instructions from the Foreign Office! The effect of Nazi propaganda has been to breed even in its sincerest opponents a combination of gullibility and scepticism which produces a sort of surrealist sophistication. In German eyes to-day nothing is what it seems to be and any explanation, however fantastic, is more credible than the obvious facts.

* * *

One of the remoter effects of devaluation might displease the Tories, if they noticed it. The prices of top-type antique furniture—the kind you see in the Brompton Road, King's Road, and all over South Kensington and Chelsea—are likely to go up and to keep going up. These prices have become quite fantastic, and even people who can normally afford that sort of thing have waited, hoping that they would come down. But Americans, it seems, have been quick to realise that they can now gratify their passion for "antiques" at less cost to themselves, and already they are coming over and combing the London shops. One dealer in the Fulham Road told me he had been visited by a party of eight, who had landed from one of the big liners only three days after Sir Stafford Cripps' announcement; in ten minutes or so they bought £500 worth (not much more than £300 now from their point of view) of Sheraton and Chippendale. Supply is limited, and one day these valuable things may become extinct on the London market. Few people, however covetous of the beautiful, can spare £85 to prevent a Sheraton table from crossing the Atlantic. Before the war the same table might have cost up to £15. Georgian chairs now at £8 or £10 each were to be had for 8s. 6d. then. According to the dealers, one of the chief causes of these abnormally swollen prices was a Board of Trade regulation, intended to hold them down, which limited retail profits to 50 per cent. The opposite occurred, since big shops immediately took to outbidding everyone else at sales, and were only interested in paying high prices, to make their 50 per cent. worth more in cash.

* * *

Most of us spend our lives trying to reconcile incompatibles. (It is a good spiritual exercise to work out one's own internal contradictions, ranging, perhaps, from a desire simultaneously to be praised by the stalls and the gallery or by the Right and the Left to the desire to live long and healthily and yet to drink like a Fleet Street reporter.) My own present pair of obvious incompatibles are that I want to encourage birds and yet keep cats. These desires may perhaps be reconciled in the winter, but not early in the summer when young birds are making their first uncertain flights. I asked a friend of great experience how he had managed to keep cats in the country and not have the sitting-room floor littered with the feathers of robins and thrushes slowly teased to death. "First," he said, "we tried putting a collar round the cat's neck and attached a bell to it so that the bird would always hear it before it sprang. But the cat defeated us by crouching so low on its belly that the bell did not ring. So then we put another bell on the top of its collar in the nape of its neck and that worked perfectly." This is an ingenious idea. My only hesitation in adopting it arises from the story of a cat which trapped itself by catching its collar in a hedge. CRITIC

ANNECY CHEESE

The United Kingdom agreed in only two cases (cod-liver oil and blue-veined cheese) to reduce a margin of preference below the minimum level.—Report on the Annecy Tariff Negotiations. 27th August.

The Annecy nations may bargain for gains
  In the Commonwealth trade Condominium,
But Britain Imperial Protection maintains,
Save for cod-liver oil, and cheese (with blue veins),
  Conceding, like others, a minimum.
The sovereign Commonwealth also agrees
On cod-liver oil and blue-veined cheese.

For all are committed to some token act,
  Enshrined in Agreements for reference,
Some mutual exchanges which clearly, in fact,
Leave most of their customs and duties intact,
  Like Britain's Imperial Preference.
Our envoys participant rivals appease
With cod-liver oil and blue-veined cheese.

In Empire and Commonwealth's high tariff wall
  No serious breach is detected;
The tropical cod-liver market is small,
And cheese (with blue veins) hardly eaten at all,
  So revenue's scarcely affected.
Can salesmanship push in the close Carribbees,
Cod-liver oil and blue-veined cheese?

In Commonwealth trading, no diehard can sneer
  At Labour, for gestures quixotical—
In the binding of Customs its conscience is clear,
As little as need be, it yields, to adhere
  To the terms of the relevant Protocol.
So let no blue-veined Tory make capital, please,
Out of cod-liver oil and blue-veined cheese.

SAGITTARIUS.

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed. Paste entries on a POSTCARD.

It is interesting to recall that when King Edward VII came to Southend in 1922, Mr. Waller's firm had the honour of cleaning the dining saloon clock from the Royal Yacht.—*Monthly Journal* of Southend Chamber of Trade. (J. A. Watford.)

To avoid disappointing our advertisers, a number of news items have had to be held over this week.—*Argyllshire Advertiser*. (Mary Rattray).

What lifted the audience of Tories to their feet was the sudden realisation that this man believed the things the Tories always say.—*Daily Express*. (Ernest P. Lee.)

Who looks after the lower paid workers to-day except the Daily Express?—*Daily Express*. (P. Laufer.)

Ashridge: Principal—Gen. Sir Bernard Paget. Course 48. Oct. 21–24: Shall I Emigrate?—Advt. in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. (Stephen Hearst).

A great many people voted Socialist in 1945 under the impression that if the Socialists won Mr. Churchill would be still Prime Minister. Mr. Churchill has probably by now succeeded in correcting this error.—*Daily Telegraph*. (A. Mair.)

Parents Learn Esperanto.—Because children at Whitburn Modern School, Co. Durham, speak in Esperanto when they do not want their parents to overhear, mothers and fathers in the village have decided to study the language.—*Daily Telegraph*. (F. M. Worsnip.)

COMINFORM AND TITO

WESTERN opinion does right to be increasingly concerned about the Cominform-Tito clash. It raises issues of principle and policy that go to the core of the conflict dividing mankind into two armed camps, and its outcome may be of decisive importance for the shape of things to come. For what we are witnessing is essentially a struggle between rival Communist views of what should be the relations between Communist-governed States.

The decisive factor in determining the outbreak and aggravation of the conflict has been the increasing tension between the Great Powers. In 1945-46 the Communist Parties, heading Resistance movement coalitions, stressed the fact that each country must discover its own path to Socialism. The prevailing Communist and Socialist view at that time, endorsed by such a sober judge as President Benes, was that the anti-Fascist war had itself brought with it a measure of social revolution; it had destroyed the Fascist State and its army, police, civil servants, judges and teachers, as well as dispossessing the landowners, big business men and bankers who had sold out to Fascism. Therefore, on the Marxist analysis of society, there was no reason why the new regimes should not proceed to build Socialism on broad and democratic foundations.

By the end of 1947 the international situation had changed so much for the worse that the nine chief Communist Parties got together in the Cominform—originally a defensive reaction against the external enemy and against counter-revolution supported from outside. It so happened that eight Labour M.P.s, including myself, visited Stalin at Sochi a few days after the formation of the Cominform. I asked him whether it meant the revival of the Comintern and the Soviet Union taking charge of the European revolution. He said "No," it was consultative in character. It had been formed by Parties that had great responsibilities in their own countries. They wished to benefit by each other's experience and to co-operate in solving social and economic problems and promoting their common interests. Above all, they wanted to stand together in preserving the independence of their countries from outside intervention. He added that the situation was quite different from what it had been after the first world war and that Communist Parties in a number of countries (the list he mentioned included Yugoslavia) were

now so powerful and mature, and had played such a great part in leading the Resistance movements and post-war reconstruction, that it would, as he said, be Utopian, and attempting to turn back the wheel of history, to try to direct such parties from any common centre.

That was then the prevailing Communist view. But as the situation grew steadily worse, the Cominform tended more and more to evolve into a militant union of the Communist Parties against external and internal threats to the Socialist societies they were building. Doctrine was adjusted to fit the new practical necessities. There was growing emphasis on the universal validity of Soviet experience as indicating the road to Socialism. The Peoples' Democracies were described as half-way houses or *tertium quids* between the capitalist States and the Socialist State, of which the Soviet Union was the only example. The political conclusion was drawn that the Cominform countries must at all costs stick together, keep in step and not challenge Soviet leadership. This view was applied almost as much to the way they ran their own internal affairs as to their conduct of foreign policy and defence, for it was also held necessary in self-defence to hurry up with the completion and consolidation of the social revolution at home, so as to leave no private enterprise sector of society vulnerable to outside interference.

The need to stand together is expressed in the view that it is the duty of all Communist Parties to bow to majority decisions of the Cominform, and that anyone who refuses endangers all the rest, is a traitor to the cause, an apostate and an outcast. To this is joined the firm conviction that there is no such thing as a "national" Communist Party or State. There are only two great camps, the American and the Russian, and there is no standing room between them. Anyone who, like Yugoslavia, breaks with the leadership of the Socialist camp is bound to land in the other. Its rulers must indeed be held to desire that result.

The Yugoslavs fell foul of these views both doctrinally and practically at an early stage. They claimed at the foundation meeting of the Cominform in Warsaw that the Peoples' Democracies in general and their own in particular were Socialist States on the same footing as the U.S.S.R. They drew the conclusion that co-operation must be based on equality and reciprocity, that the Cominform was merely a consultative association, and that in the last analysis the right of self-determination as laid down by Lenin must prevail. They indignantly refused to accept the Cominform strictures on the organisation of the Yugoslav Communist Party and the way it was doing its job, although in practice they acted on some of the criticisms.

The Cominform charges Tito with desiring to head a Balkan and South-East European Federation which could deal with the Soviet Union on equal terms. The Yugoslavs say that their neighbours exploited them by applying capitalist criteria in their trade treaties and economic policies with regard to Yugoslavia, and that the Soviet Union treated them in the same way as a capitalist Great Power treats small satellite States. Both sides accuse each other of letting down the Greek partisans, interference in internal affairs, police state tyranny, etc.

But these are secondary matters. Above all is the issue of principle. The Cominform in effect says: "You must not challenge majority decisions of the Cominform, not only because we are threatened by a common danger, but because you are a Communist and it is wrong in principle for Communists to rebel against international Communist authority" (which in practice means the C.P.S.U.). The Yugoslavs admit the "common danger" argument, and are prepared to discuss practical arrangements and compromises to embody the policy of co-operation and solidarity. They agree that great weight must be attached to Soviet views. But they deny and repudiate the principle and claim that in the last analysis they must have the right to say "No," and to run their own country according to their own judgment and their responsibility to their own people.

Marshal Tito last year told me that the saddest thing about the conflict was the decline of Communist morale. Communism, he said, had always meant to him not only raising the material standards of living, but creating a society where there was more human dignity and respect for truth and justice. The same note was struck again and again in my conversations with Yugoslav leaders this September. The last thing Marshal Tito said to me was:

> Socialism does not mean one fellow wielding the big stick and the others jumping to do what he tells them. There must be freedom and equality. If Socialism did not mean humanism, it would not be worth while working for Socialism.

How will it all end? By war, touching off a world war, or intervention, producing a Greek puppet regime in reverse? Or in the end by agreement to differ? Cominform leaders say all possibility of compromise has disappeared and that the Tito regime must and will be liquidated. Yugoslav leaders believe that the breach between the Yugoslav C.P. and the Cominform Parties is final, but that normal diplomatic and economic relations can be restored between the Yugoslav State and the other Socialist States. On the assumption, which appears reasonable, that the conflict will not be settled by resort to arms and that there is no serious internal threat, either economic or political, to the Yugoslav regime, the Yugoslavs may succeed in asserting the principle of self-determination. Their example, indeed, may prove catching, on two conditions: first, that they manage to stay independent and are not drawn into any political alignment or commitments with the West; second, that tension relaxes between the two great armed camps and the cold war is gradually replaced by an at least tepid peace.

For us in the West who have long been battling for trade and friendship between the capitalist and Communist States, this internecine conflict in the Communist camp is a tragedy. But our course is clear. In so far as the conflict is an evil by-product of anti-Soviet power-politics and anti-Communist intervention—and it is largely that—it strengthens the case for demanding that our Government take a Socialist and not a capitalist view of the British people's interests abroad, and settle our differences with Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and China by means consistent with the U.N. Charter and not by associating itself with American policies of economic pressure and discrimination, military threats and interference in the internal affairs of Communist-governed States. In so far as the conflict is due to the Communist view of the State and conception of internationalism, it is not for non-Communist progressives in the West to take sides with either party against the other. Our job is to go on fighting for trade and friendship with both, while proclaiming the principle that, whatever the merits of the questions at issue, they should be settled by peaceful means and not by the methods of power politics.

K. ZILLIACUS

THE CHALLENGE OF JARROW

(From a Correspondent)

AT street corners in Jarrow, that "classic town of unemployment" where, between 1932 and 1936, a steady 70 per cent of the working population was on the dole, you can see to-day little groups of idle men hanging about—silent, unsmiling, apprehensive. At the beginning of this month, nine hundred workers were paid off at Palmers' nearby Hebburn shipyard, and nearly five hundred more were discharged elsewhere on the Tyne, including a hundred at Jarrow's Mercantile Dry Docks. A week later, three hundred were dismissed from Vickers-Armstrongs' Walker yard, after completing the reconversion of the P. and O. liner *Strathmore*. Other scattered dismissals on a smaller scale brought the total figure of the "redundant" to two thousand within less than three weeks. The little groups of workless men in Jarrow want to know how long it takes to cure "frictional" unemployment.

A considerable proportion, perhaps half, of the discharged shipyard workers have secured fresh employment. A few are being taken back as the result of new ship-repair orders; but the latest Ministry of Labour figures show that shipyard unemployment has risen in the past month on the Tyne from 835 to 1,747. Some victims of "redundancy," such as joiners, painters and electricians are not tied to ships, and may succeed in getting other jobs in their trades in the region, though it may often be hard to obtain work near their homes. Others—particularly "the black squads"—may be faced with the choice of moving to other parts of the country. From its wartime peak of 57,000, the North-East coast's ship-building and ship-repairing labour force had fallen by July of this year to 41,000. Most of the workers displaced—a large proportion of them unskilled or semi-skilled—were absorbed gradually in other industries, especially those established under the 1945 Distribution of Industry Act. New factories already under construction or approved will eventually provide another 10,000 jobs for male workers. But will these be sufficient to offset contraction in demand for shipbuilding and ship-repair labour?

In a memorandum presented to the Board of Trade last May, the "Northern Industrial Group" of industrialists estimated that within two years the shipyard labour force on Tyneside and Weirside would be reduced by a "return to normalcy" to 22,000. Other estimates are less pessimistic; but it is generally agreed among employers that, by the end of 1950, the yards are unlikely to provide as many as 30,000 men with jobs. About one-third of all shipyard workers in the North-East are employed on repairs; and the post-war reconversion programme, including Admiralty refits, should be completed early next year. Apart from repairs, most yards have enough orders for new ships on their books to carry them over until the end of next year; but what then? In 1949, the total orders for new ocean-going vessels placed on the Tyne have been five ships aggregating 56,000 tons gross, and some medium-sized colliers have been ordered on the Weir. But orders amounting to nearly 400,000 tons annually are necessary to maintain the region's yards at their present level of activity.

The idle men in Jarrow argue that the need for new ships is far from met. They point out that, whereas wartime losses in liners and tankers have been made good, there has been little attempt

to bring the British fleet of general cargo ships back to an efficient level. How can we compete, they ask, with other maritime nations, when 20 per cent of British "tramps" are over 20 years old, while a high proportion of the less elderly vessels were built during the war for specific purposes and are uneconomical in peacetime use? To this, British shipowners reply that high costs militate against placing orders for new cargo vessels. The shipbuilders, in turn, defend the high prices they quote by pointing to the increased cost of non-ferrous metals and the possibility of coming wage increases. Meanwhile the policy of the United States in heavily subsidising shipbuilding is a further adverse factor from the North-East coast's point of view.

However this may be, the problem of shipbuilding "redundancy" is already causing bitterness. Many shipyard workers on the Tyne are inclined to say that all the talk by the employers of future contraction in the demand for labour is simply an attempt to secure wage-cuts and longer working hours—tactics which they accuse the shipowners of aiding and abetting. The most powerful craft union in the industry, the United Society of Boiler Makers, demands nationalisation of the shipyards as the one satisfactory solution to the problem. The Union's case is that by cutting out the undoubtedly high profits now being reaped by the employers, by modernising the industry's equipment, and by formulating a long-term shipbuilding plan in consultation with the shipowners, nationalised British shipbuilding could be made fully competitive with that of foreign countries such as Germany and Japan.

In Jarrow, however, the issue is raised in more sharply political terms. The Government, men say, is pledged to full employment in the national interest. If full employment is not provided by private enterprise in the shipyards, then private enterprise demonstrably runs counter to the national interest. The little knots of workless men in Jarrow are a challenge to a Labour Government's policy.

"MASTER IN HIS OWN HOUSE"

With the Adenauer Government firmly in the saddle, and the Social-Democrats isolated, the social pattern of Western Germany is crystallising. It is not a pleasant pattern. There are already 1,300,000 on the dole, and the unemployment figure is expected to be anything up to 2,500,000 by the end of the year. There has been much building of shops—mostly luxury shops—and business premises; but the housing situation is as desperate as ever, and the straits of pensioners are acute. Money is lavished on the expensive paraphernalia of the new *Bundeshaus* in Frankfurt and the six-score *Laender* Ministries, many of whose functions are now overlapping; but there is general fear that this winter will see a grave economic crisis. The liquid funds which accrued to the hoarders of commodities immediately after the currency reform are running out. There are still too many goods chasing too little money, but many leading industrialists and bankers airily assured me that this will soon be remedied by raising the standard of living through a *kolossal* influx of American capital, coupled with a speedy expansion of the export trade.

For the time being, of course, the influx of private capital is far from "colossal," being deterred, *inter alia*, by the fear that the investment might be buried in a potential battlefield. But the coming trend of American investment in the Ruhr industry has certainly, if in a somewhat camouflaged manner, made a good start with the D.M. 245 millions advanced to the coal industry (135 for mining and 110 for power generation) out of the frozen funds and through the *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau*. As for the future settlement of ownership in the Ruhr, Military Government has decreed that it will be up to the German Government to decide whether the confiscated property (now held in trust under Allied control) is to be nationalised or returned to the previous owners. In view of the present coalition at Bonn, any American apprehension about impending nationalisation would seem to be groundless enough; yet it is alleged that American interests have been pressing for a change of the relevant clause of "*Gesetz* 75" so as to rule out nationalisation for good and all. Moreover, the same *Gesetz* provides for the property of non-German nationals to be exempt from its detrustification rulings, and it is alleged that by dint of naturalisation as well as by suitable marriages of female German shareholders a good deal has already been done towards keeping influential property under the proper thumbs. As for the stringent decartellisation edicts of Military Government, it is common talk in the Ruhr—and indeed quite a joke—that the cartels thrown out of the factory gates have returned by the back-door, more potently then ever. The operative word is *Frühstückskartelle*, which simply means that the few men who matter can easily settle things over a luncheon table and by a "gentlemen's agreement" as binding and effective as any cartellisation.

There are, indeed, only a few men who matter, and they do matter greatly. The Ruhr industrialists are certainly well on their way back to that *Herr im Hause* principle, so dear to their hearts in the Hitler-Reich no less than in the Weimar Republic and in the Kaiser-Reich. Herr Kost is running coal, Herr Dinkelbach is running steel. Add Zangen, Viet, Reusch, Henle, Bruns, Pferdmenges and a dozen other names (most of them very familiar indeed), and you have got the rulers of Ruhr industry. The Allied authorities, in putting them all back to power, certainly got the efficiency they wanted. Goodness knows, these men are efficient and hard workers. As for the Trade Unions, two of their leaders told me that the Allied authorities confronted them with the reorganisation of the Ruhr industry as, more or less, an accomplished fact. All that was left to them to do was to publish a memorandum voicing their misgivings.

To ask if the new leaders—I might as well say, the old masters—are ex-Nazis, would rather miss the point. It would, indeed, be difficult to name more than one or two in present authority there who was *not* a Nazi, meaning not an ordinary Party member but one who enjoyed great power and high honours in the Third Reich.

It is also widely alleged that some actual remilitarisation is being encouraged by the Allied authorities, in the East as well as in the West (the reproach being, of course, mutual). Accurate information on this is obviously elusive. One of the more specific cases concerns one Walter Brucker, 30, an ex-Major, decorated with the Knight's Cross in the Wehrmacht. He is alleged to have been approached about joining a military *Schulungslager* sponsored by the Allied authorities (in the British Zone *Münsterlager*) but he is said to have refused and "spilled the beans." While threatening to do so, two senior ex-officers (of General Halder's Staff) are alleged to have told him not to be a damned fool by spoiling the prospect of a new career.

I failed to trace that man or otherwise to check the facts, but the essential point is that one would hardly need documentary evidence; one has but to read Halder's booklet (a whitewash of the General Staff, published under U.S. licence); one has but to talk to a score of Germans in different walks of life; one has but to keep one's eyes and ears open to feel the change of atmosphere and the extent to which the virus of jingoism—always latent in certain German strata—has been encouraged by the *volte-face* of American policy from the Morgenthauism of five years ago to the equally sinister other extreme now dominating the scene.

To say that the root-cause of the trouble is the East-West cleavage would be less trite if it were not for the vicious circle engendered by mutual fear, not to mention its deplorable economic aspect. All politicians I spoke to, would admit, theoretically, that the West and the East of Germany are inevitably dependent on each other economically. Yet, most of them would persist on a "bite-off-one's-nose-to-spite-one's-face" attitude when the mere idea of substantial trade with Eastern Germany was mooted. Even the president of Hamburg's soundest bank, a most responsible and knowledgeable man, told me that, while as a Hamburger he knew only too well that his city's natural *hinterland* was Eastern Germany, as a banker he must frown on any business deal with the Soviet Zone as an unsupportable risk.

Germany, I think, is now passing into her third (and most crucial) post-war phase. The first lasted for just over three years. We might call it the "calories period" when the people were so preoccupied with the grim business of keeping alive that they had neither the time nor the stomach—particularly *not* the stomach—for what should have been the no less important business of filling the vacuum left in their minds.

Then came the currency reform, and after the almost Christmassy atmosphere of the first few weeks they had to spend a few less exhilerating months getting adjusted to the growing incongruity between full shop-windows and empty wallets. So that vacuum in their minds was still there.

Now they've got a *Bundesstaat* and a Government, and they must settle down to the normalcy of routine life. The third phase has started and they must, at long last, tackle the overdue job of filling that vacuum. How exactly they are going to do it, after all, seems quite a frightening prospect just now. Fortunately, among the young generation there are quite a few so utterly disillusioned as to be fortified by a rather healthy scepticism. I found many of them no less suspicious of their new leaders at Bonn than of their Military Government leaders and, indeed, of any kind of propaganda. All they care for is to get on with their jobs as well and quickly as possible and, meanwhile, to have a good time.

Yet one shudders to think what these kids are being taught by all the wild middle-aged and elderly teachers now let loose on them. In the early days far too many of them, victims of routine "denazification," were held back and needlessly frustrated and embittered. Now, here, too, we have swung from one extreme to the other. Now, anything goes, any teacher may teach, even if he be the most passionately resentful of the dispossessed refugees. It is frightening to think what they are putting into the children's minds, it is indeed so frightening that one would like to reconcile oneself to the cynical remark one can hear all over Germany: "Re-education is now completed, with two thoroughly positive results: the German people have acquired a taste for Virginia tobacco as well as for football pools."

HEINRICH FRAENKEL

AGE AND SICKNESS

THE advent of Socialism, albeit partial and incomplete, has shifted the problem from the care of infants to that of the aged. The high infantile mortality of half a century ago was a product of capitalism and evil conditions of life. It was preventable and is to a large extent being prevented. But old age with its increased liability to disease is a physiological process that can at best only be delayed. Our object must therefore be to make it possible for old people, after having served their day and generation, to pass out of life as easily and unconsciously as possible.

Again, under capitalism, unemployment was the principal fear of the worker. People worked themselves to death and were too old at forty. Capitalism had little use for those unable to pull their full weight. They were put on the scrap heap and left to the tender mercies of the Poor Law, which kept them alive but did very little else. Now we accept the axiom "To each according to his need, from each according to his capacity." This involves two principles: that as much care should be given to the aged as to the children and that working life should not end suddenly, but as long as the capacity and desire for work remains this should be permitted and encouraged. Most old people wish above all else to feel that they are still of use and capable of doing something for the general good. The contrast between the old ladies in chronic sick wards, busy and happy knitting jumpers and jerseys for their children and grandchildren, and the old men with nothing to do is very striking. Mr. Jim Griffiths, the Minister of National Insurance, tells us that of the 7,000 persons becoming eligible for old age pensions every week, two-thirds elect to go on working.

In the past old people who became ill and unable to look after themselves at home were sent, often after but a cursory medical examination, to the chronic sick ward of an infirmary or institution. There they were put to bed and kept there, first because there were no facilities for people when they were up, and secondly because patients are much easier to nurse in bed. They stay put and give much less trouble to the nurses who have already quite as much as they can do. Unless special precautions are taken, disabilities and deformities soon develop which make getting up difficult or impossible, and they remain in bed until they die, sometimes after years.

Old people have surprising mental vigour, though their outlook may be limited as the result of a restricted and laborious life, or they may become listless and apathetic when taken into a hospital to die. They love to be busy and their main interest is in their homes and friends, and especially in their children and grandchildren, whom they want to see as often as possible. In 1944, I had occasion to visit a good many children and old people who were evacuated from London to places in the Midlands and North. Almost without exception they seemed to be well looked after, but whereas the children were happy and contented the old people were miserable, pleading above all else to be allowed to return to London in spite of bombs and other disadvantages.

The present acute shortage of hospital beds, due it would seem mainly to increased trust in the new Health Service, has called attention once more to the needs of the chronic sick. This is perhaps fortunate, for nothing could be more disastrous than to provide further accommodation of the same type as in the past. All chronic sick wards and homes for the dying should be permanently closed. Old people are certainly more prone to illness, but from most of these illnesses they recover quite well with or without a stay in hospital. Most hospitals of any size should have special wards for old people in which they can be cared for by a geriatric specialist assisted by other members of the hospital staff. These wards should be well lighted, for old people see badly in a half light, and with handrails on both sides of passages, stairways, and on the walls of wards and lavatories. There should be tables and chairs for those able to get up, and especially armchairs of different types to suit the varying needs of old people. Above all the floors should not be slippery or highly polished. Nearly all the patients will require massage or physiotherapy.

A proportion of cases leaving these geriatric wards will be able to return home at once, but the majority should rather be transferred to a combined Recovery Home and Long-stay Annexe. This may well be a large house staffed both as regards doctors and nurses from the parent hospital, so that there can be continuity of treatment. It is important that both convalescents and those who will in all probability never leave the annexe should be housed together. This will avoid the atmosphere of hopelessness, or the equally pernicious assumed cheerfulness usually associated with chronic sick wards. Patients should wear their own clothes and visitors should be admitted daily. Indeed, the atmosphere should be much more free than that of an ordinary hospital ward in which a certain amount of discipline is essential. To keep the inmates pleasantly occupied is one of the most exacting problems and much more difficult in the case of men than women. Part-time nurses will assist in the maintenance of contact with the outside world.

But many more old people can be treated in their homes than was formerly recognised, and the hospital can often be brought to the patient instead of the patient to the hospital, with advantage to all concerned. Indeed it is doubtful if any further hospital beds are required for the treatment of the aged than we have at present if these are used to the best advantage. A special out-patient department with a geriatric specialist in charge will do much to help these aged people if transport is provided. Many will require physiotherapy and group games and exercises; it is extraordinary how thoroughly these are enjoyed by old people, especially if an element of competition or emulation enters in. Like other specialists the geriatric consultant should visit the patient in his home at the request of the general practitioner and arrange for his removal to hospital should this be regarded as necessary.

In the few cases in which they have been tried, geriatric social workers have proved of great value. They visit old people in their homes, assess their needs and endeavour to supply them. Thus air mattresses, cylinders of oxygen, etc., are loaned, visits of the home nurse and home help arranged, and food requirements considered. Where a "Meals on Wheels" scheme, which brings hot dinners to people in their homes, exists, this can be used. In some cases the assistance of a chiropodist or physiotherapist in the home will also be required. The washing of foul linen is perhaps the greatest problem, for not a few of these old people are singly or doubly incontinent. The linen will have to be collected, washed and returned at frequent intervals. This can be carried out perhaps more conveniently in the laundry of the nearest hospital, but it is doubtful whether the local Health Authority is not the body really responsible for it.

And this brings us to what is perhaps the greatest difficulty of all in the care of old people, for four separate authorities would seem to be involved —the Welfare Authority, as long as they are fit, and in sickness the general practitioner under the Executive Council, the geriatric specialist under the Regional Hospital Board and the local Health Authority through the operation of Clause 28 of the Health Act, and full co-operation between each of these authorities is not easily attained. It should not be beyond the wit of man however to devise machinery to secure this, and by so doing save many much needed hospital beds, considerable public expense and add greatly to the happiness and comfort of an increasing number of those who deserve well of the nation.

SOMERVILLE HASTINGS

FARMS AND FARMERS

THE farmer has suffered badly from mythology, and he figures with painful prominence and clarity in this peculiar urban folklore about country life and ways which has developed since the normal Englishman became a town-dweller. In appearance, character and habits, this mythical farmer is an unmistakable creature; we have no difficulty in recognising him when he appears, burly, breeched and bewhiskered, in the caricatures and the cruder type of play. Indeed, as a symbol he is highly effective; everyone knows who he is the moment he appears. But as a guide to rural reality he does worse than fail, he actively misleads, and there is just enough truth in him to prevent the imposture being obvious to the casual observer. For he clearly derives from the old High Farmers of mid-Victorian days, who were great men in their time, and founded traditions which still endure. But neither he nor anyone else is a typical British farmer; the existence of such a creature is purely notional.

The average farmer, it is true, can be calculated from the statistics; but the average and the typical do not necessarily coincide. For there is no standard British farm; geology, climate, history and economics have seen to that. And hence there can be no standard British farmer. Indeed, it is significant that the word has no exact definition and the figures given for the numbers of farms in England and Wales vary considerably. In 1939, one authority reckoned 250,000, another 330,000, though this included 20,000 spare-time smallholders with less than two acres apiece, but the detailed official survey of 1941–3, which excluded all holdings of less than five acres, returned 277,000 farmers and 290,000 farms. We may say, therefore, that the industry is in the hands of a little over a quarter of a million producers who range from the large-scale industrial farmer to the glorified allotmenteer and include a rich and peculiar variety of economic and social types.

The really large farms are very few in number; there are no more than 1,400 holdings of over 700 acres in England and Wales—say, on an average, 20 per county—and they form a collection of individual enterprises rather than a homogeneous class. Nevertheless, two main divisions can be distinguished. On the one hand, there are the potential prototypes of the several thousand acre farm run on the lines of a multiple business concern as advocated by Sir Daniel Hall and others. These huge holdings number, apparently, not much over a hundred, and Mr. Bateson has commented justly that "the most interesting thing about them is that, in spite of all that has been written about the application of industrial methods to agriculture, they *are* so few." On the other hand, there are the "business" farms, of, say, 700 to 1,200 acres run by a "clean boot" man who works through a bailiff and concerns

himself primarily with the commercial side of things, though he may have some particular interest such as the breeding of stock. Thus the farmer of this type resembles an officer with his bailiff taking the place of the sergeant.

The next group consists of farmers occupying between 150 and 700 acres. Their number is difficult to estimate, perhaps some 45,000, and they probably occupy about half the total farmland of England and Wales. This class includes a number of "clean boot" men, but the majority, despite their collars and ties, lead the "dirty boot" life of a working foreman. They are, in fact, sergeants with a squad rather than officers with a sergeant; if we follow the old rules and allow one man per 40 acres and five per cent. of a farmer's time for supervision per man it is clear that most of them will put in a good deal of manual work as well as dealing with the business and office side of affairs. Thus the farmers of this type combine practice with management yet enjoy a greater command of their time than their smaller economic brethren. It is, therefore, mainly members of this class who serve on County Councils and other public bodies and provide the leaders of the farming organisations.

This comparative freedom reflects the dependence of the larger farms on hired labour and the relative unimportance of the personal manual work of the farmer. But such farms are in a numerical minority, and the "family farmer" predominates in the holdings of between 50 and 150 acres which form the largest single homogeneous group of farms in the country. They number, apparently, some 100,000 and they employ on an average not quite two men apiece; but this includes sons and other relatives of the farmer. Thus the personal physical work of the farmer is an important factor in the running of the farm, and in many cases his entire labour-force joins him at dinner in the evening. The importance of this is immense, for the bulk of labour on these farms is cheap, directly interested in the outcome of the work in hand and unconcerned with such things as minimum wages and maximum hours. Further, in hard times the farmer and his family are prepared to draw no more than their keep from the land; hence an economic elasticity denied to the larger farm whose wages bill, short of dismissals, is fixed and absolute. To this class the statistically average farmer belongs.

The number of agricultural holdings under 50 acres is immense, according to some estimates over 200,000 in all. But many, perhaps most, of these are of little agricultural significance; they include, for instance, the retired man's orchard, accommodation acres and the odd fields which are household adjuncts rather than commercial units. The remainder fall into two main groups, on the one hand the small farm, a reduced edition of the family farm, which supports the nearest thing we have in this country to a peasantry, on the other the specialist holding of the market-gardener, the fruit-farmer or the poultryman, highly capitalised and intensively worked on "industrial" lines. Both of these types of holdings are important, but they are very different in character and attract and produce very different types of men. The contrast illustrates in striking fashion the general incoherence of British farming.

For incoherence is the first impression produced by any statistical analysis of our farming industry and it is an impression supported and confirmed by the countryside itself. Nature, it is true, has settled a basic farming pattern in many districts but the farming units themselves were for the most part created and developed by man at his most individual and haphazard. Orwin's team, for instance, who picked at random 24 square miles of a Midland county for their 1943 survey, found that it contained 44 farms under 50 acres, 51 between 50 and 150 acres and 28 over 150 acres and they could trace no obvious connection between the type of soil and the size of farm which stood on it. This is typical and as it is with the sizes of farms, so it is with the standards of farming. In most counties, mixed and specialist holdings, "A" and "C" farmers, modern and antiquated methods exist happily side by side. To take an extreme instance: when, in the war, the small farmers of Montgomeryshire came in their Sunday suits to watch the six-ton tractors of the W.A.E.C. at work on the reclamation of their bracken-covered uplands, men in the subsistence tradition of medieval Europe were seeing the latest equipment of the "industrial" power-farmer ploughing, for the first time in history, one acre of British soil in one hour.

The second impression is the unexpected predominance of the smaller type of farm. For the Mythological Farmer misleads us. He is clearly a man of substance, economic as well as personal, he has time to hunt and attend markets and it is significant that we never meet him working except, perhaps, at harvest-time. Clearly, therefore, he is one of the "clean boot" men and can hardly farm under, say, 300 acres. But in reality only one farmer in twenty in England and Wales occupies over 300 acres; indeed, barely one farmer in three occupies over 100 acres. And 100 acres is not a very big area. It is only some 700 yards square, say twelve fields of eight acres each and an enclosure for homestead and orchard. The numerical majority of farmers occupy less than this and the average holding is only 84 acres.

Admittedly, classification on a basis of acreage is necessarily somewhat arbitrary, for the acre is not an absolute unit; it crudely reduces 4,840 square yards of moorland or rich fen, clay, loam or sand to an absurd and nominal equality. Nevertheless, assessment on the principle of size is sound, for it is this which determines the character of the farm. A large farm is not just a small farm expanded; a small farm is not just a large farm reduced; they are distinct types of productive unit. Let us not be deceived by the similarity of the produce, the equipment or the raw material; the internal organisation of the farm and the relationship of those who work on it will be very different. We can still see in British farming, as through a glass, darkly, the dim and misty outlines of the Factory System and, set against them, the smaller units of Domestic Industry. The distinction is fundamental and the line of division is dependent on hired labour.

Now, the number of farm labourers to-day is just over the half-million mark; so we may allow on an average a little under two per holding. But in so varied an industry as British farming averages are poor tools and in reality the majority of these men are concentrated on a minority of farms. The official Survey of 1941-3 estimates that 44 per cent. of holdings over five acres in England and Wales employ no labour at all; another 22 per cent. employ only one regular worker who is in many cases a member of the farmer's family; and only 20 per cent. employ more than two regular workers—yet this 20 per cent. account for 70 per cent. of the entire paid labour force. In short, only a minority of farms are dependent on hired labour. Our Statistically Average Farmer with his 84 acres, for instance, employs 1.8 men; but half of this hypothetical figure will probably be a son or other relative, so that not more than a third of his labour is hired. To put things another way, the farm labourer to-day constitutes only just over half the entire man-power of the farming industry. The rest, apart from casuals, is provided by the farmer and his family.

There is, therefore, no very obvious answer to the question, "But what do you mean by a farmer anyway?" which so troubled Geoffrey Garratt at that "hectic but elementary political discussion" twenty years ago. The figures have changed a little since he gave his answer in six of the best pages he ever wrote, but his general conclusions still hold; few townsfolk realise the small number of "clean boot" men, the large number of "family farmers" or the overwhelming numerical preponderance of the small farm. Unfortunately, therefore, that bloodless and charmless creation, the Statistically Average Farmer, is a better guide to rural reality than the rubicund and familiar figure of the Great Urban Mythology. NIGEL HARVEY

SO THEY SAY . . .

"SENSATIONAL" Sunday newspapers should be put out of business, stated Dr. J. R. Rees, director of the World Federation for Mental Health, at Edinburgh on Saturday. Last Sunday, explained Dr. Rees, he had bought "one of the more popular Sunday journals," and on looking through it had found "at least thirty headlines dealing with crime, assault, pregnancies of small children and other matters which showed abnormality among the people of this country." That and "many other similar journals" published on Sundays could aptly be described, added Dr. Rees, as "chambers of horrors."

How did the Sunday newspapers of October 16 report this eminently quotable tribute? The *Observer* headlined it: SUNDAY "CHAMBER OF HORRORS"; the *Sunday Express*, THE "HORROR" NEWSPAPERS. The four London Kemsley papers reacted in unison, with "Editor's footnotes" to the effect that, by not naming the paper which he bought, Dr. Rees was actually accusing them all—when such strictures could, of course, pointed out the *Sunday Graphic*, the *Sunday Empire News*, and the *Sunday Chronicle*, be applied "only to a small minority." The *Sunday Times* went further, and obtained a reassurance from Dr. Rees that he had "specifically stressed the difference" between it and the "sensational" Sunday newspapers. In a full-dress editorial it then confidently called for "names, please."

As for the journal that Dr. Rees had in mind, that was anybody's guess. A number of papers, however, did not consider the speech even worth mentioning—although they did manage to find room for quite a varied selection of sensations:—

News of the World:

"I HAVE NEVER KNOWN A VILLAGE LIKE IT," SAYS SCHOOLMISTRESS—THE TRUTH ABOUT WOOTTON RIVERS

. . . a village where every rule of genetics was violated . . . "one of my girls, only 15 years old, had a baby . . . there are boys of seven who know all the so-called facts of life."

Sunday Dispatch:

SEX AND NAKEDNESS—ARE NUDISTS IMMORAL?

Sunday Pictorial:

END THIS SEX MUDDLE

The People:

"I SAW ALL THE HORRORS OF A COCK FIGHT."

Reynold's News:

SECRETS OF THE DEATH CELL—DUTY EVERY WARDER DREADS.

AUTOLYCUS.

PANTHERS—ON POINTS

A CURIOUS symptom of the American consumer's growing "sales resistance" is the emergence, for strictly commercial purposes, of the neighbourhood "hostess." No fewer than nine important manufacturers now employ nation-wide sales forces to do little more than persuade strange women to throw parties. Goods are then unloaded on the guests, who are made to feel they can't let their hostess down by refusing them.

Here is how it works. The salesman drives into a residential district and pushes a door-bell. To the lady answering he shows a large ceramic ornament, such as a sleek black panther on the prowl, and says: "How would you like to have this on your mantle, ma'am, absolutely free?" Instead of sensibly saying she would rather be dead, the average American housewife counters with: "What do I have to do?" "Give a little party," says the salesman, "for your friends and neighbours—nothing elaborate, just coffee and cake, and at any time convenient to yourself. See how this ornament looks on your bureau or mantle."

The American housewifely mind is so constituted that, once the lady has beheld the mantleshelf garnished with the black panther, she cannot endure life without it. At the salesman's bidding she picks up the phone. "Hallo, Myrtle? This is Mildred. I'm giving a little party at three o'clock Wednesday, it's for the White House Company, they're doing some advertising in our neighbourhood . . . Hallo, Malita? This is Mildred . . ." When the guests arrive the house is filled with ceramic ornaments—troubadours serenading senoritas, blackamoors dancing a *pas de deux*, love birds billing, herons fishing in a bowl, and of course the black panther prowling.

The salesman then explains his "points" system. The hostess gets one point for giving the party, one for any party resulting from the party (here the salesman cocks a questioning eye at the guests), and one for every $10 worth of goods ordered at the party. One point will get the hostess a pottery pepper and salt set, five a pair of china book ends; but what she most wants is the black panther—procurable for fifteen points. The ceramics? Oh! Dear, me, no! They're only available to people who pile up points. What *is* for sale (by the White House Co.) is a line of soaps, cleaners and detergents better and cheaper, he says, than at the stores, where these particular goods are never on sale.

The party gets under way. The salesman plays a few warming-up games with the girls. They are always of the pencil-and-paper variety because the other side of the paper is a ready-printed order form for the goods. The ladies win prizes such as they could pick up in any Woolworth's for a dime. Then comes the demonstration of the goods for sale, and an appeal to pitch in for dear old Mildred so she can win her panther. At none of these parties I have attended—and they are now being used to peddle silverware, cosmetics, soaps, pots, pans and even real estate—has the current "Mildred" ever won a black panther. Acquiring too few "points" she has always had to settle for a love bird or two. One Mildred undertook to keep on giving parties until she did win a panther.

A White House Co. salesman told me his ceramics cost him an average of 50 cents each; he takes 45 per cent. of the gross as his commission, and averages about $6 a party, arranging about fifteen a week. His dearest prize, the black panther, costs him only $1.50 wholesale. By and large, he reckoned, every hostess spent $2 on coffee and cake to win a prize which usually she could have bought in a store for $1. "If," he added happily, "the stores could get them." They now can. The five-and-ten-cent stores had been feeling the heaviest competition from party-peddled goods they could not stock. In defence they found a way to stock the party-prizes. Woolworth stores in a score of West Coast towns lately broke out into tremendous window displays of a $2 ceramic ornament—a sleek, black, prowling panther.

DONOVAN PEDELTY

The Arts and Entertainment

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

IF you have read the Sunday papers on this production at the Aldwych you will probably be thinking that Mr. Tennessee Williams has written a masterpiece. "A garbage heap"; "crude bellowings of sex"; "the reptile house at the Zoo"; "talk like cesspools"; these are phrases we used to see only when an artist has been lucky enough to hit the gutterpress where it hurts them most. Unfortunately *A Streetcar Named Desire* is not another *Ghosts*; Mr. Williams is not Ibsen or Hardy or D. H. Lawrence; and Laurence Olivier's production, though scrupulously clear of any pornographic emphasis, does not bring out the play's undertones of poetry—firm, delicate and logical undertones which sound far differently from the jukebox cacophony of *No Orchids for Miss Blandish*.

Stanley Kowalski, a tough common sexy Polish-American, and his wife Stella, who comes from a decayed upper-class family, live in Elysian Fields, a shabby riverside district of New Orleans, melodious with hot trumpet and blue piano, and reached by a streetcar named Desire. Stella's sister, Blanche duBois, a brittle prinked-up faded beauty, disdainfully takes refuge here, and nourishes her dreams of happiness and respectability on the bottle, hot baths, romantic or neurotic passes at Stanley and his neighbours; and, above all, by dramatising in conversation her past life. At sixteen she had married a poet, whom she found to be abnormal; in her inexperience and resentment at her helplessness she let him see her disgust; he shot himself. After that her life degenerated into a scramble for escape from the misery of reality. She took to drink and sex, but held on to her dreams. Some of this she tells us herself in talks with her sister; the damaging part is uncovered by Stanley, who is humiliated by her taunts, and angered by her unsettling of his happy domestic life. He throws her into despair by insisting that she must leave, takes away her last hope of security by warning-off a friend who is about to marry her, and then, while his wife is having a baby, forces her into bed. In the final scene Blanche is led off to an asylum.

Told like that the play sounds cheap enough, but the author's tone and intentions absolve him of any charge of vulgarity. The crudeness and violence of some of the incidents and dialogue are necessary agents in Blanche's breakdown, and valid symbols for the author's aversion to life as it exists. There is no exploitation of violence as in many films, nor any of the pinching and fumbling that whoop-up another play that shocked the Sunday newspaper. Where the dialogue is banal, it is deliberately banal, flattened and lowered for the purpose of dramatic irony, as in Mr. Williams's earlier play *The Glass Menagerie*, which worked out the same theme in a more respectable environment.

In that play the heroine lived in a world of illusion, and she became as remote from life and as fragile as her own glass animals; the hero was a manufacturer of dreams, who picked the lock of his trap with symbols, and came to his truth by the path of illusion. Blanche duBois is an ill-fated member of the same family. "I don't want realism," she says, "I want magic." Pinned under the glare of reality her magic fades. As she is led off by the doctor she sums up her life with the unendurable pathos of the mad—"I have always depended on the kindness of strangers."

It is this terrible loneliness, this solitary agony, that we feel unbearable. By comparison with this horror the violent incidents of the plot—the drunken brawling, the love-making, the bad language—are seen (or should be seen) as subsidiary evils committed by people who are themselves not evil, who, indeed, in some important qualities, are positively good. It is not the people who are vile but the conventions, the false values and the mass-produced idealism of an acquisitive society that prevent people enjoying either simple reality or complex dreams.

The play does not quite come off, because there is a too great discrepancy between the cliché quality of the symbols Mr. Williams has chosen, and the individual quality of his feeling: the hot trumpet and blue piano and four-letter bonhomie carry too many different associations for us to be able all the time to accept the significance he wishes them to bear, and so, though they are always effective theatre, their effect is melodramatic, and obscures the central theme. And there is too much talk in some scenes, too much making sure a point is not going to be missed, so that when it does arrive we are past caring about it. Finally the end of the play, with its insistence on the physical details of her apprehension, weakens and coarsens the pathos achieved immediately before, when we realise that her expected gentleman friend from Dallas will be the doctor from the madhouse.

The acting throughout was sincere, direct, and accomplished, and Vivien Leigh gives a wonderful performance in a part that would tax even a great actress. Her make-up as a tired crumbling beauty, her voice with its nervous tension and drinker's hoarseness, and her self-consciously genteel bearing are triumphs of art. The pathos of the lost despairing creature she most successfully conveys, and if she stops short at this side of the character, and is not able to give us the lustier appetites, that is not her fault, and we have no right to carp when she has given so much. Renée Asherson is simple and directly honest as the sister, but I could believe neither in her passion nor in her old southern ancestry. Bonar Colleano was a plausible choice for Stanley. He is virile and charming: but he has an intelligence that cuts like a razor, and it is almost impossible to think of him as a brute. Moreover, he lacks the technique to give variety to dialogue, and offered us a one-note performance, strong and convincing but monotonous. The director must accept responsibility for these limitations, as he must our gratitude for the dexterity of the production for which, however, Jo Mielziner's favourite scenic dodge of painted gauze (to give simultaneous setting of indoor and outdoor scenes) was not specially appropriate.

After this remarkable if imperfectly achieved piece Mr. Williams will either develop more positive values, or decline into the most successful playwright of our day.

R. D. SMITH

GERARD DAVID

THERE are few Old Masters whom the English should approach with greater caution than Gerard David. He was gifted with all the reticent virtues that make even our tamest water-colour painters popular; and seen outside their context, as they must be in England, his works assume an air of originality not theirs by right. An exhibition of *Gerard David and his Predecessors* would put him in his proper perspective; but since we are given *Gerard David and his Followers* (sponsored by the Arts Council at

Wildenstein's) it seems only right to point out that David was at best an inspired *retardateur*: craftsmanly self-effacing, but with the exception of the National Gallery's *Nailing to the Cross* (No. 4) incapable of any great formal invention.

It could not have been otherwise. In 1480, when David arrived in Bruges, the city's fortunes had already entered on their decline. The foreign bankers who during the previous hundred and fifty years had made her the most prosperous city in the Netherlands, reduced partly by imprudent loans to Maximilian, and partly by hostile legislation, had begun their migration to Antwerp; a ruinous and unnecessary war had resulted in the failure of the wool trade, and with it the impoverishment of the old burgher class; while the court itself had grown so poor that far from being in a position to foster the arts, it had sold its plate to the Medici, surrendered its jewels to Foulques Portinari, and next year was to disperse the magnificent library formed by the earlier Dukes of Burgundy.

In such a state of decay, Bruges could scarcely hope to foster new modes of expression or to attract artists in sympathy with the spirit of the age. Yet David chose to remain there till his death in 1523, a span unbroken except for a brief and unproductive visit to Antwerp between 1510 and 1520. It is a true index of his conservative nature that he did so, and his art is correspondingly retrospective.

The Renaissance left David untouched. When he essayed a classical motif, such as the insertion of two famous classical medallions into the architectural surround of the throne in the *Arrest of the Corrupt Judge* (No. 1), the terms grew almost unrecognisably Gothic; and the secular themes of the Renaissance were equally foreign to his nature. As befitted a member of the ancient *Société de Notre Dame à l'Arbre Sec*, he found his vocation in repeating, with tireless zeal, the religious masterpieces of his predecessors. With such a wealth of example behind him, what need was there to invent afresh? His designs are almost without exception taken from earlier masters: the Van Eycks, Campair, Meuline, Roger van der Weyden, and *petits-maîtres* of fifteenth century engraving. Consider his *Genealogy of the Virgin* (No. 5). Here the stem of the Jesse Tree expands into a decorative, flat-pattern arabesque all the more two-dimensional for being placed against the plain gold background of early devotional painting. The design is borrowed from an earlier engraving, archaic in scheme and perpetuating, like all "popular" engraving, the pictorial invention of a yet earlier generation. Not even such a backward-looking picture as Botticelli's National Gallery *Nativity*, painted at about the same date—1500—represents such a drastic denial of Renaissance humanism. That David himself came to realise the inadequacy of his vision may be concluded from his late *Transfiguration* (No. 17). Here one discerns a last pathetic attempt to endow a pictorial formula scarcely more schematic than that of say, Giovanni Bellini's *Transfiguration* at Naples, with the largeness of Renaissance painting. It is a failure: the design is empty, the drawing mean, and the whole mood of the picture wan and dispirited.

Within his limitations, however, David was capable of certain unspectacular achievements. He was a sensitive portrait-painter. His *Donors* (Nos. 3 and 5) make one wish there had existed in the Bruges of his day that class of rich bougeois to whose commissions we owe Memlinc's numerous portraits. He was also unusually responsive to nature; and though his landscapes never attain the visual exactitude of one Van Eycks, or the emotive intensity of Van der Goes, they have a poetry of detail that holds the eye where many bolder compositions fail. David was, in fact, one of these patient, fastidious souls, incapable of the heroic or the splendid, who find their happiest expression in the representation of the minute. He was a natural miniaturist: the most successful pictures in this exhibition are the tiny Munich diptych (No. 19), Mr. Lloyd's *Scenes from the Life of St. Anthony of Padua* (Nos. 15 and 16), the two small *Morning Virgins* (Nos. 11 and 13), the *Triumph of the Cross* (No. 6), from Vienna, and the famous *Vierge à la Soupe au Lait* (No. 18); none profound, but all satisfying.

With David's death, painting at Bruges became to all intents and purposes an export business, supplying the most backward states of Europe with conventional madonnas, pretty Leonardesque magdalens, etc., all so like one another as to be wellnigh indistinguishable. The best of these artists, Adriaen Isenbrant, is well represented in the exhibition: his *Lady of Seven Sorrows* (No. 27) is a perfect repertory of earlier Netherlandish design. Less accomplished was Ambrosius Benson, whose work was so much sought after by Spanish clients, and is to this day so abundant in Spain, that he was at one time thought to have been a Spanish painter himself. On these late Bruges pictures one can do no better than quote Michelangelo's observations on Flemish painting, made in a discussion at Rome late in the 1530's:

> It seems beautiful to women, particularly to the very old and the very young ones, as also to monks and nuns, and to a few persons of quality who are blind to rhythmic values. It is an anecdotal and sentimental art, which aims only at success and obtains it easily, not by values of painting, but by the subject matter. The painters select things that gladden one, particularly saints and pious figures, for which tears are always ready. . . . They take pleasure in showing actual stuffs, bricks, ruins, rags, grasses, and the shadowed fields with rivers, bridges and trees—these they call landscapes—with a great many figures here and there. All this is very popular: the least artistic intelligence can find therein something that appeals to it. An interest in facts, and two eyes alone are necessary.

People who like that sort of thing will be glad to learn that on hearing these opinions, Michelangelo's beautiful Platonic friend, Vittoria Colonna immediately "undertook the defence of the religious and consolatory art of the North."

DAVID CARRITT

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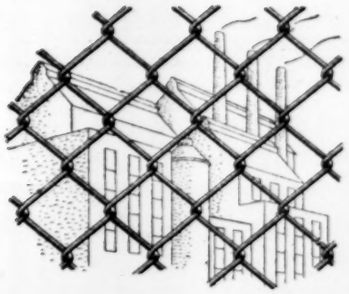
PROPHET AND KAPELLMEISTER

EVIDENTLY there are two Ernest Blochs, but to think of them as Jew and European is an oversimplification. Whatever the subject, whether or not the melodic intervals show an oriental cast, the style of this composer has always tended towards impassioned oratory, achieved by means of convulsive climaxes and short, pregnant seminal motives which resemble the physical gesture of a clenched fist or an outstretched arm. The other half of his personality, the good craftsman, is well aware that emotional rhetoric, however sincere, provides an inadequate basis for extended composition; and his life-work may be seen as an attempt to find a formal framework strong enough to contain these outbursts of supercharged emotion. The conflicting elements in his musical personality suggest the Ego and Super-Ego of Freud rather than purely national or racial characteristics, and the distinction between them sometimes cuts across the distinction between Jewish and non-Jewish inspiration. In *Schelomo*, it is true, an intensely nationalistic subject coincided memorably with an intensely passionate outburst of pessimistic oratory; but in the *Sacred Service*, which is a setting of Hebrew liturgical texts and ought surely to be the most Jewish of all his compositions, the harmony and choral writing are largely Western, conventional, and almost impersonal (even the modal element possesses no more than a mild flavour of middle-period Vaughan Williams). Conversely, one of Bloch's most passionate lamentations, the slow movement of his Piano Quintet, falls naturally into place in an abstract composition which has no overt nationalist significance. This is probably still his finest work; never since then, not even in the Violin



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Concerto or the Second String Quartet, has he achieved so successful a balance between the impetuous and the orderly. Of late years the two elements in his personality have shown a tendency to split apart. The recent Piano Concerto indulged in an unrelieved and apparently uncensored spate of oratory; whereas the *Suite Symphonique*, an agreeable and well-made work, carries no strong mark of the composer's personality (except, perhaps, in the later sections of its *Passacaglia*). It is disappointing, when the prophet hangs his mantle on a peg, to discover beneath it only the conventional frock-coat of the Kapellmeister.

The London Philharmonic concert at the Albert Hall did less than justice to the three Bloch compositions performed (*Suite Symphonique*, *Schelomo*, *Sacred Service*), largely because the composer is not a very precise or persuasive interpreter of his own music. He is said to dislike the unforgettably vivid and poignant performance of *Schelomo* which was recorded for the gramophone by Emanuel Feuermann and the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski, on the ground that it is too slow and too emotional, but I suspect this attitude of being no more than a belated intervention on the part of the Super-Ego; certainly the performance by Zara Nelsova and the L.P.O. under the composer would have benefited from a richer and more grief-laden eloquence on the part of the soloist, and a more primitive luxuriance of colour on the part of the orchestra. Marko Rothmüller sang the Cantor's part in the *Sacred Service* with nobility of style but in a tone-colour which tended towards monotony; the London Philharmonic Choir did well, but unnecessary difficulties were placed in the way of the audience. What we need during the performance of any vocal music (above all, during an unfamiliar choral work) is a full printed text, and enough light to read it by; deprived of both these, we are bound to spend a lot of unprofitable time wondering and speculating. But I protest in vain: this is an age which loves the dark.

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TELEVISION NOTES

BOTH in sound and vision wireless is effectively developing techniques of play-building and play-acting separate from those of the stage and the cinema. In the broadcast sound-play the dramatist not only works without benefit of costume and scene but also lacks that sounding-board of emotions, the audience. Except for a few mechanical devices he relies wholly on language, and the actor consequently must lay aside all his resources of posture, make-up and gesture and realise his part entirely by the spoken word. Television singles out other capacities in the actor, notably his powers of concentrated expression and, above all, of close-up revelation. Many actors who are effective at long-range on the stage do not succeed in the point-blank dimensions of the miniature screen. The test which television imposes upon the actor is dictated by the narrow field of action that the cameras can command—a mere fraction of the wide open spaces on which a play can be deployed in the theatre. The image transmitted to our little screen allows no elbow-room for opulent gesticulation or brisk sallies of action; indeed, most strenuous bodily activity is a wasted effort in a medium that thrives best on a minimum mobility. Economy, reticence, intimacy are the qualities the actor must seek to apply, and these, mainly, through his fluent command of facial expression.

These considerations were brilliantly demonstrated a week or two ago by Roger Livesey and Ursula Jeans in a new play which revealed a rare fidelity to the basic principles of television. The piece, by Frank Tilsley, was *The Canvas Rainbow*, a domestic interior in which homely sentiment was delicately balanced in a situation of tragi-comedy. The build-up of the suburban family was accomplished, in Royston Morley's exemplary production, by alert incisive close-ups of typical scenes in the parlour and the garden—and then the documentary was transmuted into drama of great force and integrity. The dialogue was given the subordinate role of disclosing what was at issue between husband and wife, but the motives and emotions involved were entrusted for interpretation to the powers of facial expression which Ursula Jeans and Roger Livesey so sensitively command. As a sound broadcast *The Canvas Rainbow* would have sounded banal, for its language was thin and unevocative. But by virtue of delicate, intimate, visual acting, it scored finely on the screen. It was true television.

In its new edition *Foreign Correspondent* has become more ambitious and purposeful. The main element is still a sight-seeing panorama (by Charles de Jaeger) of European countries, accompanied by a vivacious and observant guide, but it is now reinforced by a prologue and epilogue in which a foreign affairs expert reminds us of the issues which seethe below the picturesque surface. The Benelux tour was well done, except that Edward Ward, usually most ready-tongued of continental guides, was deplorably script-bound in his performance. This reading of lines beneath the very nose of viewers is a bêtise which ought not to be tolerated at Alexandra Palace.

The passage of the seasons brings new triumphs for Outside Broadcasting. *Ice Cavalcade* from Olympia was too massive a manoeuvre, perhaps, to be contained in television's most limits, but the close-up display of horsemanship in Billy Smart's Circus was given us in the most exciting focus. I manage to extract a perverse compensation from the drearier stretches of Variety entertainment by switching off the sound and watching the dumb images of the labouring comics. It is a cruel indoor sport, perhaps, but how it exposes those performers who have not yet discovered that their main business on the screen is to practise a visual art. I find this procedure helpful with many items in *Cabaret Cruise*.

W. E. WILLIAMS

THE MOVIES

"Mighty Joe Young," at the Gaumont
"Caccia Tragica," at the Academy
"The Interrupted Journey"

It is now seventeen years since first appeared the wondrous Kong, sighted by a film director and his leading lady behind great barricades on an uncharted island, where hideous monsters snarled and clawed in the primeval slime and subservient natives appeased the sacred ape with ritual and young women. The impact of sophisticates on this frantic beast could lead only to the starkest tragedy, and what happened afterwards is the cinemane's favourite bedside tale: Kong rashly transported to New York, infatuated with the actress (the myth has a simple grandeur—he wanted only to stroke the pretty lady), terrorising and upheaving the city in pursuit of her, lumbering with strange cries up the façades of hotels at night and invading bedrooms, dislodged at last from the top of the Empire State Building, where he has carried his love, by a fleet of army bombers.

Mighty Joe Young attempts to add a new chapter to the myth, and is directed by the original creator of *King Kong*, Ernest Schoedsack; but the new beast, it soon appears, simply has not got it in him, and Schoedsack himself seems almost indifferent to the splendour of his old vision. To begin with, Mighty Joe is far smaller than his predecessor, no more than a large gorilla who has been brought up in childhood by a young girl. When he grows up, she alone can control him, usually by playing his favourite tune, "Beautiful Dreamer." Emptily, the pattern repeats itself: Mighty Joe is transported to America, he and his mistress contracted by a night-club owner who will present them in a spectacular entertainment, "Golden Safari." Like any caged beast, Joe frets in captivity, and when he goes off his food we realise with scorn that there is more than a touch of humanity about him; an overgrown baby who hardly knows his own strength, too easily moved by sentimental music. Taunted, Joe breaks out and destroys the night-club, and after various adventures—notably at a burning orphanage, where he rescues children from the flames—he is returned to Africa, with his mistress, who has brought a cowboy to keep her company.

Finally, the myth is violated by the introduction of so much sentiment and comedy on the human level, and only one or two scenes approach the original for massiveness of conception; and the ending, particularly, is altogether too cosy.

Caccia Tragica, abbreviated at the Academy to *Pursuit*, is an Italian film made two years ago; basically melodrama, its rather diffusely developed story of a chase to recover money stolen by bandits from a peasants' co-operative is crammed with primitive violence, sex and realistic detail. Though well acted, often brilliantly executed, and with some striking photography (much of it exterior), it somehow fails either to move or to convince—probably because its young director, Guiseppe de Santis, has been too eager to load his first film with as many ingredients and devices as possible.

A new British film, *The Interrupted Journey*, directed by Daniel Birt, has been generally released without a West End send-off. It is a slick, implausible thriller whose scriptwriter, emphasises improbabilities with extremely false dialogue. But, though its middle-class suburban couple (Valerie Hobson and Richard Todd) is characteristically remote from reality, the film has an assured glossy style and some ingenious camera work that distinguishes it from most routine native productions.

GAVIN LAMBERT

Correspondence

COMMUNIST TRIALS

SIR,—The simple fact is that Rajk and his associates were charged with treason, with plotting to overthrow the Hungarian State by means of an armed uprising. Detailed evidence of the nature of the plot and the actions of the accused was amassed from witnesses, from minor accomplices, etc., against the weight of which no defence could have reasonably be maintained. The defendants chose to confess; to confess, furthermore, with such thoroughness that allegations of the use of drugs, police brutality and so on were impossible.

Reporters at the trial did not think the charges were "trumped up." To quote the conclusion, after a sober and exhaustive analysis, of Stephen White of the New York *Herald Tribune*: . . . "This reporter believes that Rajk and his associates were guilty of the charges brought against them by the Hungarian Government."

Thus the "object of the Rajk Trial" was clearly not in the first place, as Mr. Kingsley Martin suggests, "to create throughout Eastern Europe the image of Tito as the newest traitor and most dangerous enemy within the Soviet camp." The object was, as it had been in the Soviet Union, the elimination of a real and very dangerous conspiracy. It is true that Tito's Balkan ambitions emerged with startling clarity from the confessions. Here again Stephen White does not share Kingsley Martin's incredulity:

> It is not imagining too much (he wrote) to believe that Marshal Tito would enjoy a friendly Government in Budapest and that the Marshal, no tender character himself, would use the means closest to hand for his purpose.

The Marshal now has a variety of friends in the West. Not all are sincere Socialists like Kingsley Martin. It is hard to believe, for example, that the American desire to admit Yugoslavia to the Security Council is prompted by tenderness for the Yugoslav type of "Socialism"; or that the current Greek-Yugoslav rapprochement is on a Socialist basis.

Not long ago the democratic world was thankful that, as a result of the Soviet treason trials—as Ambassador Davies noted—"there were no fifth columnists in the Soviet Union in 1941." The stability of Hungary and the People's Democracies will, in these coming years, be the decisive factor in the peaceful development of European economy; it will one day be clear how much this stability owed to the timely revelations of the Rajk Trial throughout the Balkans.

JOHN ALEXANDER

The New Central European Observer,
35 Pont Street, S.W.1.

SIR,—The apparent objectivity of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION makes all the more dangerous the kind of anti-Communist propaganda contained in Mr. Martin's commentary on the Budapest trial.

What is Mr. Martin trying to do? Has he reached that stage of irresponsibility which does not realise that everything calculated to exacerbate East-West misunderstanding plays into the hands of those warmongers whom we know very well to exist, and makes easier the provocation of that overwhelming clash which all profess to dread and which most of us genuinely do?

If Mr. Martin is in real doubt about the Budapest trial why does he not pause for a moment and consider whether he might be wrong? What inner knowledge gives him the right to state that he read the authorised text with "complete scepticism"? Why—if he is as honest as he would claim—does he advance with certainty a view which clearly is emotionally based and whose effect on those who accept it can only be to worsen international relations?

As evidence of the emotional foundation of Mr. Martin's commentary I cite the following:

1. His professed incredulity at the suggestion that Churchill ever entertained the idea of reconquering the Balkans and Eastern Europe for Western Imperialism. Surely, with the access that Mr. Martin has to official documents and personal papers of those with first-hand knowledge published in the last few years, he cannot seriously doubt that Mr. Churchill would have put into effect such a scheme had there been the least opportunity?

2. His statement that the Yugoslavs did most of their own liberating. This claim has been widely stated and generally accepted in the West. It has been challenged from the East and received unexpected support the other day when Brigadier Maclean—hardly pro-Communist—in his book *Eastern Approaches*, made clear that from his personal experience it was the Red Army and *not* the Yugoslav partisans who were the decisive factor in this part of Europe. If my memory serves me right this point was made in a review in your journal.

3. His allegation that Russia has threatened war on Yugoslavia. This is Mr. Martin's own interpretation of a phrase "more effective measures" contained in a recent Soviet Note to Yugoslavia. Surely this is an exceedingly free translation, which, for someone who *must* understand the implications of increasing doubt and suspicion about the U.S.S.R., merits a much stronger word than irresponsible.

L. G.

[As to L.G.'s first point it is, of course, true that during the war Mr. Churchill had in mind the post-war anti-Soviet front just as Yugoslav and Russian Communists had in mind the post-war Communist revolution. But that does not mean that during the war Mr. Churchill, Tito and Stalin were not allies fighting the Germans.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—After 30 years' instruction from Nazis and Communists, surely it must be possible to think up a better defence of judicial murders than that contained in Mr. Kingsley Martin's article. His argument runs: Because Popes massacred heretics for an issue which "was once held to justify them," because "Christians" (does he mean all Christians?) "are *as ready as*" (my italics) "Communists to act as if the end justifies the means," because some people "applauded the indiscriminate bombing of open cities," therefore it is misguided, trivial, and superficial to condemn the trial, verdict, and execution of good Communists by good Communists on framed and false charges. I seem to remember to have heard that it was said by them of old time that two wrongs don't make a right, but Mr. Martin's doctrine is that one wrong anywhere at any time makes everything right for ever after. The difficulty is that, if this is true, it knocks the bottom, not only out of Christianity, law, justice, truth, and civilisation (which would, of course, be all to the good), but also out of Communism (which would be a tragedy) and Nazism (which has, of course, been destroyed by Stalin), and Herr Roehm was just as right as Herr Hitler; Trotzky, Kamenev, and Zinoviev as Stalin; and Mr. Laslo Rajk as Mr. Vladimir Wrong. It also knocks the bottom out of an article by Mr. Martin which I read in another paper a few days ago in which he argued that it was wrong to retain the death penalty for murder in Britain. And as for the last sentence in Mr. Martin's present article, if all murder of innocent persons is right, it is a little sentimental to worry about the fact that the person whom we murder happens to be our "comrade."

I feel that if I gave my thought to it, I could find a better argument than this for judicial murders on the grand scale. But it is not my business, for I am one of those Rip van Winkles who have always condemned the murders of Socrates, Christ, and Giodano Bruno as well as that of Mr. Rajk.

LEONARD WOOLF

[This letter is a remarkable example of how strong emotion may lead to misunderstanding. The argument and the intention of the article were precisely the opposite of those assumed by Mr. Woolf. If he is a Rip van Winkle on this point, so are we. Nothing in Mr. Woolf's letter stands, because when Mr. Martin said that Communist trials of the 20th century raise the same great issues as Papal massacres of heretics in the Middle Ages, he was not justifying the Popes or the Communists, but condemning both. ED., *N.S. & N.*]

POLICE COURT LAWYER

SIR,—In his article on the Metropolitan Police Courts "Barrister" is inaccurate:—

(a) It is not the general practice to "thunder away on a typewriter" in the London Stipendiary Magistrates' Courts. In only one Court is a typewriter ever used—and there only when certain Magistrates are sitting.

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(b) It is possible to tell, within reasonable limits, when a particular case is likely to be heard. One is summoned either for the morning or for the afternoon, and a case fixed for the morning is never adjourned to the same afternoon. The afternoon cases, which are normally civil cases, are frequently divided between those called for 2 p.m. and those called for 3 or 3.30.

(c) Recently appointed Magistrates, at all events of recent years, are men of long experience at the bar, to whom the procedure of the Court is not bewildering.

(d) A woman applying for maintenance for her child or for a Separation Order does not find her case heard " among assaults and indecencies.' Matrimonial cases are assigned to an entirely separate list, carefully separated in time from the criminal lists. Moreover such cases are heard only in the presence of the parties, their lawyers and the press.

Since he is inaccurate in these elementary matters, it is reasonable to suppose that " Barrister " is still at an early stage of his career. If this be so he may not yet have acquired the knack of differentiating between the relevant and irrelevant and he may have mistaken a well-deserved rebuke for discourtesy. When one considers the standard of advocacy with which the Stipendiary so frequently has to cope one often wonders at his patience and courtesy.

Among the Stipendiaries there are individuals who, by reason of their approach to certain types of cases (and particularly political cases) and of their faith in the credibility of every police officer as a witness lay themselves open to criticism. But the criticism implicit in " Barrister's " article is not in general justified. " SOLICITOR "

PALESTINE POLICE

SIR,—In support of your reply to Mr. Skinnard (October 15) regarding the posting of ex-Palestine Police to stations in the Jewish districts of London, I feel I must say a word about what I found to be a very anti-Semitic attitude amongst members of this Force.

On my way home to the United Kingdom from the Middle East, our troopship called at Haifa to evacuate one of the last contingents of the Palestine Police. This was in the middle of last year.

After two years amongst the nationalism and strife of the Middle East, with the final burst of anti-Semitic feeling in Egypt coming with the invasion of Israel, I thought I was quite inured to this prejudice. Although I am not Jewish, I was disgusted to hear members of this Force openly boasting that they would indulge in a few " Pogroms " upon their return home.

Whilst I do not suggest that these were Mr. Skinnard's pupils, I must insist that these boasts did not provoke any outcry from other members of the Police, indeed, they seemed to be very well received.

Admittedly, these men had had a trying time in the closing stages of the Mandate, but that is not the point. Anyone mixing with the police on that evacuation boat would never have entertained sending them to perform duty in the Jewish areas of any of our big cities. It is simply asking for trouble. Ex-N.C.O.

STARLINGS

SIR,—" Some ornithologist " has indeed written an account of the habits of starlings and their gatherings and some of the questions raised by Critic have been answered. Many others remain to be answered. The best general account of the roosts, which Hudson described as " certainly one of the finest sights that bird life presents in England," is probably that in F. B. Kirkman's *The British Bird Book*. Since then many accounts have appeared in nature magazines and scientific journals—and much nonsense has been written in the popular press.

R. S. R. Fitter, in *The London Naturalist* for 1942, published the results of a survey of the London roosts and of the fly-lines to them. The survey showed that the birds roosting in Trafalgar Square and elsewhere came in from their feeding grounds in the suburban gardens and fields from six to twelve miles away. Outside this " catchment area " the starlings fly to the country roosts.

This Society is now attempting to solve some of the many problems of the London starling roosts. Three of the problems are the reasons for the autumn switch from trees to buildings (not *vice versa* as suggested by Critic), comparative numbers from month to month (Trafalgar Square is occupied throughout the year), and whether the Continental birds, now arriving here in vast hordes, come in to the city roosts or use only those in the country.

The last problem can best be solved by catching the starlings at the roost and marking them with aluminium rings. This is no easy task, but last winter a small number were caught with a hand-net from an office window in Trafalgar Square. To date, two have been recovered, one at Sutton and the other at Mill Hill, eleven and nine miles away respectively.

Significant results can only be obtained by ringing a large number of birds and I should be most interested to hear from anyone with a window where starlings roost within easy access.

Perhaps the people in the Embankment Gardens have other preoccupations: in Trafalgar Square the starlings provoke much comment of the " coo, look at all them birds " variety, but most people regard them as sparrows or as migrating birds.

E. E. PARRINDER, *Chairman*
London Natural History Society,
27 Gwalior House, Chase Road, N.14.

CONSPIRACY

SIR,—The reports of the court martial of Sapper Simons appearing in the popular national press did not omit any sensational details of his and Corporal Lamport's escape, life " on the run," and subsequent arrest in Eire. They found no space, however, to report, as did the *Manchester Guardian*, that he was extradited to face a common-law charge of conspiracy which was dropped after extradition had been effected.

The Public Prosecutor dropped the charge of conspiracy; which, said the detective-inspector in court " was the only thing I knew of." Instead Simons was charged and sentenced as a deserter from the armed forces, an offence for which extradition would not have been granted.

An interesting question arises, certainly of ethics if not also of law; as this seems to be a useful way to recapture people who may have sought refuge in foreign countries for various reasons. Perhaps our legal system will go so far in the direction of, say, Eastern Europe that some future British Government will be able to bring refugee political opponents home to face fabricated charges (later to be dropped) of conspiracy, theft, or even more serious common-law offences. On which side, one could ask, was the " conspiracy "? B.

AN EAR FOR POETRY

SIR,—Mr. MacNeice, in " Poetry, the Public and the Critic," says of words that the poet is " only using with a new precision tools which lie ready to everyone's hand," seeming to imply that anyone who can talk and read should be able to appreciate poetry. I wonder if an ear for poetry, similar to an ear for music, is not required? (Similar to, but quite distinct from—Yeats was almost tone-deaf to music.)

An ear for music consists chiefly in being able to hear *mentally* musical notes and sequences, and to distinguish the elements in musical combinations. It is a sort of inner hearing and may (as with Beethoven) continue unimpaired by physical deafness. I think the appreciation of poetry needs a similar capacity, so that when a line of poetry is read (aloud or silently), it stands before the mind as a sound-image pattern: for it is only through the perception of this pattern of word-relations, usually enriched by associational echoes, that the poetic " meaning " of the line or passage is brought within reach.

This " meaning " is distinct from the ordinary meaning of the words; like the " meaning " of music it cannot be defined but only experienced. It is not consciously " understood," but the unconscious understands it in its own way; and probably the main function of rhythm is to lull the conscious and so to set the unconscious free to respond. But the first essential is to have the kind of ear for poetry which enables the pattern to be apprehended. To anyone lacking this, poetry as such will be as meaningless as music is to a person who is tone-deaf.

In musical education, a great deal of attention is now paid to aural training and testing. It would be interesting to know if anything comparable has been tried with poetry CHARLES DAVY

" RUSSIAN SECRECY "

SIR,—In his discussion of Munich last week Mr. A. J. P. Taylor takes as a datum Russia's " impenetrable secrecy " and " refusal to allow " knowledge of her strength. He mistakes the manner for the matter. So long as national customs remain, Russia's manners will be more secretive than ours. But the U.S.S.R. of the 1930's was unique amongst modern societies for its constant and searching examination of its own strength, much of it in public, and the gist of that published by Moscow in Western languages as well as Russian. This is most obvious in economics, for the plans and the reports on their fulfilment had no parallel elsewhere (the newspapers at times even carried daily figures for coal, iron, steel, oil, railway transport and motor production). It is also true of the social structure of the country, which never lacked a strong, if partial, illumination of a kind that was not generated by any other society. Until the Trotzky trials began in 1936 foreign students could get in, and to some extent, about; American universities took much more advantage of this than ours. The legislation, policy analyses, newspapers, books, technical and learned journals available could have kept a considerable research institution going on several crucial aspects of Russia's strength. Of course these mountains of printed materials were no more readily comprehensible than the documents produced by other societies with unfamiliar modes of organisation and thought. But the academic tradition has provided certain standards of discipline, caution and intellectual generosity in the use of much slighter evidence for the understanding of other peoples and periods. As a historian, Mr. Taylor might ask why this was not done on Russia. J. MILLER
51 Kersland Street, Glasgow, W.2.

SOVIET SCIENCE

SIR,—One feels sympathy with Dr. Waddington in his discovery that scientists in the Soviet Union don't behave like those at Cambridge. One must, however, envy him his insight. For he was able to perceive, merely by reading " The Situation in Biological Science," that he was dealing with a backward, semi-barbarous culture, etc. Also he discovered that the Russian agriculturists were " primarily technicians rather than scientists." British technicians will surely be delighted to learn that, in Dr. Waddington's view, they are not primarily scientists. Every scientist in the Soviet Union is a technician in the sense that the practical applications and results of his work are the things by which he is judged. This is not always the case here. Some of the results which the Soviet agriculturists have achieved are well known. They include the vastly increased yields of crops, the great tracts of desert which now bear vegetation for the first time, and the creation of valuable hybrids. These things do not suggest a " fantastically low level of technical competence." Nor are the Russians themselves likely to regard the term " farmer " as an insult, which is clearly Dr. Waddington's meaning. It is sad that a Cambridge biologist should triumphantly proclaim the cleavage between the academic and the applied scientist, as if this were a virtue. This cleavage, with its implication that " pure " science is for the élite, while " applied " science is for the bumpkin, has been the curse of Western science for generations.

Surely it is time that British scientists stopped being superior about Soviet science, and reflected for a moment upon, for example, the portent of the Russian atomic explosions? It is possible that the " crude and intemperate farmers " may prove to be no more incompetent than the physicists. H. I. WINNER

CHARLES DUVEYRIER

SIR,—I am collecting material on the Saint Simonian writer, Charles Duveyrier. With Gustave d'Eichthal he paid his first visit to England in 1831-32, where he met John Stuart Mill, Thomas Carlyle, Grote and Groves. There are references to him in both Carlyle and Jane Welsh's correspondence. I should be most grateful if any of your readers could tell me of any further material. J. B. G. COOPER
Pension Colombo,
20 rue des Ecoles,
Paris, 5e.

BOOKS IN GENERAL

A HUNDRED years after his death what are we to make of Poe?* He is a writer into whom large, inexact things may be read and from whom many things important to literature have been taken; a second-class writer, yet a fertilising genius. Or, more politely, the paradox is that his genius was narrow and his influence wide. Read those poems again which Baudelaire compared to crystals: it is a strange comparison for verses so slack in their simplicity, so mechanical in their devices. And yet we are haunted by overtones of an exceptional experience. It is no ordinary tomb on which he weeps; there is more than loss in those tears. There is guilt and dismay. Afterwards, the mourner will be haunted not by the dead but by himself. When we turn to stories like *The Pit and the Pendulum*, *The Murders of the Rue Morgue*, *Ligeia*, or *The Fall of the House of Usher*, the accent is self-assured, but we are not, after two wars, bounced or interested by the rhetoric of suffering and sadism. D. H. Lawrence found the material conventional, meretricious and vulgar. The voice of incantation appears to be disguising the experience, is slurred and constructs the conventional nightmare of the drug addict or the facile alcoholic:

> Not hear it;—yes, I hear it, and have heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, I have heard it—yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am! —I dared not, *dared* not speak. *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—and yet I dared not—*I dared not speak!* And now—to-night—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death cry of the dragon, and the clangour of the shield!—say, rather the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault.

Efficient, silly and yet its harangue can overpower. It is theatrical and yet not pure theatre. If we set aside the skill of narration —and we ought not really to do so because part of Poe's gift to literature is his teaching and example of the conscious artist—there is more than the expert tale of mystery or horror; there is the sustained enacting, in a tone eventually subverting and in conditions amounting to claustrophobia, of a universal human pain. The redeeming thing is Poe's gift of generalising morbid experience.

Poe's parents (it is well known) were actors; and one is obliged to see him as an actor-writer. Perhaps his technical genius in creating new literary forms came from the crossing of the actor's temperament with a medium that was alien to it. He comes on to the stage, among his grotesque properties—the pit of the Inquisitor, the rotting ancestral mansion, the luxurious Disraelian palace or the jewelled valley—and with the first oratorical words and the first hypnotic gesture, he has created an atmosphere. An atmosphere, the hostile must say, that one could cut with a knife. We suspect the old trouper and there is no doubt that his prose comes out of the catalogue; he goes from one cliché of Romance to the next, and the names of his characters, the Lady Madeleine, Ligeia, Berenice, Lenore, are shamelessly stagy; and like the notorious "Nevermore," lend themselves to parody. But what grips the reader is that Poe is evidently *not* acting: the story is *his* story, this is his pain, enlarged and generalised as poetry is, and it can suck us into its whirlpool as irresistibly as the death ship of *The MS Found in a Bottle* was drawn into the ocean. Suffering and guilt are his subjects: to magnify is his method.

There is a point at which the magnifying glass makes the object too large, when the close-up loses nature; and that is the point of vulgarity in Poe. But I do not believe there is a story in this assiduously inventive writer which is not taken from his own state. The invention of the detective story, even of the scientific romance, were not simply lucky discoveries. They were also, we can now see, the natural outcome of his divided nature: the clever mind of the neurotic observing its own sensibility and its terrifying private fantasies. The mysterious can be chemically split; explanation is as exciting, sensationally, as the mysterious thing. In the tales of the dying women prematurely buried, in the story of Ligeia rising from the dead to poison and annihilate her rival, we can see Poe dreading the death of his Virginia, wishing for it and willingly incurring remorse and punishment. One understands what such themes could suggest to Baudelaire and Dostoevsky; moreover, the writings reflect a life that seems itself to be a direct expression of Poe's own theory of "the unity of effect." His character is, in a sense, to be read at a sitting; it was constructed, we feel, from the end first; it was a suicide, the deliberate seeking of a fate. For Poe is steeped in pride; allowing for his manias, D. H. Lawrence's criticism that Poe blasphemed against the Holy Ghost within him, is a true one.

Poe the alcoholic, Poe the incestuous, Poe the unconscious homosexual, Poe the Irishman, the Southerner, the derelict, Poe isolated in American life and ruined by the *odeur de magazine*—these versions are familiar. They have their share of truth. In his quietly provocative introduction to *The Centenary Poe*, Mr. Montagu Slater reminds us of the part played by simple financial misery in Poe's life. He got £2 for *The Raven*. It seems doubtful whether writing for magazines ruined him: he was a magazine-man. He was a brilliant lecturer. He was not a physical weakling: he had been a regimental sergeant-major and a fine swimmer. Mr. Slater goes on to a vague argument of the kind that might be useful if it could be fully documented—and I do not see how it can be—that art for art's sake began with Poe, and has remained dominant in Western literature ever since. He links the doctrine with solipsism and with Poe's own doctrine, expressed in characteristic tones of incantation in *Eureka*: that the soul is a particle of God that must return, annihilated, into His Oneness. Poe's famous proposal of the short poem, that long poems are merely short ones connected by prose, that works of art must be grasped at a sitting and that there must be unity of effect, is made to support Mr. Slater's argument. But to say that intensity and the love of beauty above all else have any special connection with art for art's sake is to force argument. (Bourgeois formalism next!) Poe's doctrine of the instantaneous has, indeed, been realised, as Mr. Slater says, in many important forms of modern art; but that is far from meaning that copious works are more diverse, or that intense works are incapable of the comment of life. The personal voice and experience of Poe underlie his artificialities, and we now understand that what used to be called morbid experience is universal and has a direct bearing on spiritual life. What Mr. Slater is trying to say requires far greater elaboration, and a proper caution before the fallacy of the single formula.

One great difference in kind between Poe and Sartre, Camus and Graham Greene, whom Mr. Slater regards as the latest if not the last of Poe's æsthetic line, is one of energy. In the sense that he carries within him the feeling of power which was felt in the early nineteenth century, Poe is, so to say, electric: a positive neurotic, a wilful madman, an aggressive suicide. His terrors, his pains, his guilt, his punishment, his melancholy itself, are energies of the soul. He is perfectly able to live his derelict and isolated life regardless of the community. A loquacious and throbbing pride enables him to do so; his sorrow runs a pipeline to the eternal. The later writers lack this aggressiveness. Pain is inflicted upon them. They are ciphers of passivity—as, indeed, the ordinary man is among the political horrors and farces, the double-faced institutions of our time, where persecutors and persecuted change places with the nullity of papers in a file. Though they attempt to dignify themselves with the belief that they are drifting to annihilation in the One, the Nothing, the Historical, or the Nevermore, they bob up and down on their way over Niagara with the feebleness of corks. Long ago they lost their bottles. They do not die: they blackout.

Destruction is taken out of their own hands. They just run into it absurdly. Poe did not believe life was a fraud; he believed it is a tragedy; he had the Romantic afflatus. Loss and death were inevitable; pain was an action felt or done. It is pure speculation, but if he could be reborn one imagines him writing his stories not about the victims of the Inquisition, but about the great repressed subject of the day: the morbid psychology of the Inquisitor and torturer and *his* guilt; simply because that is now the dominant, positive and energetic aspect of contemporary pain. The Inquisitor has had his romantic wish for power: what has *he* paid for it?

It is usually said that Poe is an un-American and cosmopolitan writer, and Baudelaire declared that America was Poe's prison. But Poe was a natural prisoner. It seems to me he was very American and especially so of his time; intellectually aggressive and provincial, formed by journalism, a practical and exacting critic—see his analyses of novels by Dickens and Hawthorne—as cranky in his way as Thoreau, Emerson and Hawthorne, for example, of excellent personal independence in opinion. Above all, he is American in the capital hold that nostalgia has on his emotions. It is the melancholy, lonely, dominant note in the feeling of American literature: from the Mark Twain of *Huckleberry Finn* to T. S. Eliot. It is indeed this feeling which encloses even the slack poems, that seem to us sentimental or merely pathetic; it is on a general longing, that he is able with all his power of rhetoric to play. The melody that hangs over his writing, impure but sweeping and haunting, the loneliness of his incantations, themselves seem to be designed to deploy that simple feeling; and the dream world which is not really a dream world, owes its effect to the fear and the longing it is meant to convey. A nation of lonely people seems to project his fantastic palaces or to be considering his unlikely dungeons; for in a new and rapidly successful country, part of the human personality is a casualty, and in that injury is the loneliness.

Mr. Slater's *Centenary Poe* is a good representative collection. It contains the expected stories though not *Berenice*, which has interested psychoanalysts; the important essay on the *Philosophy of Composition* and the famous analysis of *The Raven*. (The bird Poe first thought of for this poem was a parrot!) It also contains the almost exalted but tedious *Eureka*, the statement of his beliefs. Among the poems I missed two which are admired, the second *Helen* poem and *The Sleeper*.

V. S. PRITCHETT

**The Centenary Poe.* Edited with an introduction by Montagu Slater. *Bodley Head.* 15s.

AN AGE IN RUINS

The Age of Constantine the Great. By JACOB BURCKHARDT. *Routledge.* 18*s.*

The Age of Constantine is so impressive and so nobly conceived a work that it defies criticism; it is like trying to make an impression on the Roman amphitheatre at Nimes, or the Pantheon, with a shoddy little modern weapon like a sten gun. There it so substantially is, a work of art conjured up from records of a past age, in the idiom of an age already as remote as that it describes, and there is really very little point in scratching away at its minor defects. One strolls into its enormous vaulted halls and looks down the immense vistas of the age before specialisation, feeling dwarfish. One stands silent before Burckhardt's vivid picture of a decayed and senescent paganism falling prey to ignoble superstitions and credulities imported from the east, religion decaying into magic, disintegrating and leaving a void which Christianity was predestined to fill. The whole thing is splendidly done, completely logical, and entirely convincing—provided that one disregards all the research of the past seventy-five years which shows the natural evolution of paganism to that point at which it flowered into Christianity. If one does inspect the structure, or this part of it, with, for instance, Legge's *Forerunners and Rivals of Christianity*, Cook's *Zeus* and Frazer's various explorations of the Adonis legend, in mind, one is compelled to recognise that one is dealing not with an account of reality but with a construction which stands or falls by its aesthetic value. At this point, where it seems that one is tossing clods down on to Burckhardt's coffin, one discovers one has company—Burckhardt himself. "After all, our historical pictures are, for the most part pure constructions, as we shall see more particularly when we come to speak of the State. Indeed they are mere reflections of ourselves." So he spoke almost twenty years after he had written *The Age of Constantine*, in the course of a lecture at Basle. That was in 1868 or 1869. In 1870 he went even further in doubting the value of that kind of construction "To me, as a teacher of history, a very peculiar phenomenon has become manifest, namely the sudden devaluation of all mere 'events' of the past. From now on, my lectures will stress the history of ideas, retaining only the indispensable scaffolding of events." When one reads this one is overwhelmed by the feelings of a Channel swimmer at the turn of the tide; over yonder is the shore, the reality of the past, one is swimming towards it as strongly as ever, but one is travelling rapidly away from it, and with every purposeful stroke its outlines get muzzier, and less sharp. If we are dealing with histories of ideas that are mere reflections of ourselves . . . why then bother with history at all? Burckhardt explained his purposes in a letter to Nietzsche—

> . . . I think I may say that I never taught history for the sake of the thing which goes by the high falutin name of World History, but essentially as a general subject . . . I have done what I could to bring them (his students) to take personal possession of the past—in any shape or form—and at any rate not to sicken them of it. I wanted them to be capable of plucking the fruits for themselves, nor have I ever had in mind to train scholars or disciples in the narrower sense; all I aimed at was to make every member of my audience feel and know that every one may and must take independent possession of what appeals to him personally, and that there is joy in so doing.
>
> I am well aware that such an aim may be condemned as fostering amateurism, but that does not trouble me over much.

Well, then, provided it is clear that we are going to meet Burckhardt and not Constantine, and in Switzerland of 1852 and not in Italy in the third and fourth centuries, it is all right. Just as it is all right if we take up the great mass of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* to learn about Gibbon and the eighteenth century, and don't fool ourselves that we're going to find out the truth about Rome. If the two are compared the striking thing that emerges is the astonishing loss of confidence between the earlier and later history. They both find the morbid fascination in the collapse of the Roman structure that is so hard to understand, but where Gibbon is the confident member of a new age of the Antonines, Burckhardt is scared. And it isn't just the big bang of the French Revolution that scares him, it's the future. He's scared of the future, and rather dislikes his present. Gibbon inspects the scattered ruins of the Roman *apparat* with regret, but with every confidence that his century has restored the situation. Burckhardt hasn't any confidence at all, our *apparat* is creaking, and cracking, and the wind is rising—he seems to say—and to cheer us up reads us an account of the last big hurricane that blew a civilisation out into the bay.

Why did he build this great palace of fear and set Constantine's ghost patrolling about in it? Why did this fear and sense of fellowship with the doomed Romans of the collapsing Empire come stalking into the academic mind in the years after the French Revolution? Even the translator of this attractive—and extremely readable—edition of Burckhardt's book trembles with the ague in a foreword—"No epoch of remote history can be so relevant . . . a new and revolutionary social doctrine with an enormous emotional appeal was spread abroad by men with a religious zeal for a new authoritarian cosmopolitanism and with a religious certainty that their end justified their means. . . . developments have made the analogy inescapable . . ." And so on. But in fact the analogy simply doesn't work, anything less like the Church of St. Augustine than the International would be hard to find. And nothing to-day in any way resembles the economic pressures, external problems, or the administrative machine, of Constantine's time. In reality the situation, if we are going into this futile business of analogy hunting, is pre- rather than post-Roman. *The Age of Constantine* is the age of the dissolution of a Great State which corresponded in extent with its whole cultural area.

Our Cultural area (Walt Disney, nylons, factory, shirt and trousers, movable type) is nearly universal but not in the least unified, either as a Great State or anything else. The pangs which are so painfully racking it are presumably birth pangs of one or two Great States resembling the Roman Empire, and the age of Constantine—if there is to be one—lies four, five, or six hundred years ahead. But even there the analogy is purely superficial, the only resemblance these possible Great States will bear to the Roman Empire will lie in their extent—and remembering China that does not take one far. Yet still Burckhardt's fears are preferable to Gibbon's confidence. It is to his credit that he couldn't go on like Gibbon churning out those stuffed neo-Roman periods, the little tittering jokes about the great tragedy of power, and the blandly silly asides about the greater tragedy of the corruption of a faith. And he didn't mistake the civilities of a few polite drawing rooms, or of his don's snug harbour, for a civilisation. He's much more tolerable now, holding up his cracked Roman mirror to his white, frightened face, than smooth Mr. Gibbon taking snuff and not hearing the suicide Calas choke there under the kitchen table, and the other Calas scream as they broke him on the wheel.

But in the end what one admires so enormously about Burckhardt is his courage—the courage it took to recognise that the great, massively convincing, structure of *The Age of Constantine* was rather a fraud, a Roman Triumphal Arch in an eighteenth-century park, to throw away a technique he had so completely mastered, and to work out for himself the much finer technique of his books on Greece and the Renaissance in Italy, which do give one so entirely that personal possession of the past, and the joy, that he speaks of in his letter to Nietzsche.

ANTHONY WEST

AN AFRICAN WORTHY

Baker of the Nile. By DOROTHY MIDDLETON *Falcon Press.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mrs. Middleton, in her first book, has joined the fashionable throng of those who write or compile biographies of the eminent, or slightly less than eminent, Victorians, not in malicious amusement but in adulation and envy of our robust, well-fed, and optimistic forbears. Baker was, with Livingstone, Speke and Burton, one of a band of African explorers who in the four years between 1859 and 1862 laid the foundations for the British colonies of Nyasaland, Tanganyika, and Uganda. His main achievement as an explorer lay in his opening up of the southern waters of the Nile, through the tangled swamps of the *Sudd*, to the shores of Lake Albert Nyanza; and, as one of Ismail Pasha's governors, in bringing about some sort of law and order, and retribution to the Arab slave-dealers, in the western part of what is now the Uganda Protectorate. Mrs. Middleton is more concerned with Baker as a man than as a geographer and explorer who helped to carve a highway from Khartoum to Zanzibar. But his personality is so bound up with his geographical achievements that it is difficult to separate the two. Baker was an interesting contrast to his fellow-explorers of the Livingstone era. Livingstone's own gruesome revelations of slave conditions in Central Africa, which so deeply stirred the humanitarian conscience of the British public on his return from his first historic march across the Continent in 1856, strongly influenced the conduct and the policy of subsequent travellers. For Livingstone, though not for Baker, the renown of geographical discovery, the rich prospects of trade and, in so far as it had any place at all, of annexation, were submerged in the passionate outcry for the abolition of slavery. To what extent had the traveller's indomitable trudging through swamp

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and jungle and pestilential forest, by opening up the country, as Livingstone put it, to "Commerce and Christianity," helped to break the Arab slave-dealers? That was the criterion by which the returning explorer was apt to be judged. It was not one with which Baker had much sympathy.

Baker was no missionary of the Livingstone type. Indeed, from his early days as a hunter and a settler in Ceylon, he loathed missionaries of both denominations almost equally. And he had little sympathy with the armchair abolitionists; not, as many supposed, because his family had made a fortune in Jamaican sugar and came from Bristol, the home town of the West Indian planters and merchants, but because he refused to sentimentalise the slavery issue. He was remarkable among his contemporaries for thinking not in terms of anti-slavery or trade or missionary endeavour, but in the wider and more modern terms of colonial development. Colonial development meant annexation, and with the abolitionist British public as with the British Government, though for less spiritual reasons, annexation as a policy was about as unpopular as it could be.

Some of Mrs. Middleton's most successful chapters are devoted to Baker as the Colonial administrator and to the even more remarkable Lady Baker, the Governor's second wife, who was never known to scream though the air was thick with spears and the yells of black men, whose resource and serene air of authority came continually to the rescue in subduing the native inhabitants. In many ways, they were the prototypes of the self-sacrificing colonial official and his wife of later days. The Baker's Government House in Equatoria, with its nearly full-length portrait of the Princess of Wales, the silver-framed photographs, the knick-knacks meticulously and tastefully arranged, was the first scene in the pageant of British social and official life in the heart of Africa.

Like most Victorian explorers, Baker was a prolific writer. Books, pamphlets, lectures streamed from his pen. In Africa he diligently wrote up Journal after Journal as the hazards of life permitted. By extracting the more vivid passages, published and unpublished, from the heavy folds of Baker's Victorian prose, Mrs. Middleton has enabled him to tell his own story in an easily digestible form. It is an exciting story, reflecting Baker's immense vitality, his tenacious optimism in the face of incredible odds. She herself interrupts from time to time with a page or two of explanatory comment, well-informed, restrained, a little prim at times and enlivened by an occasional touch of an almost clerical frivolity which blends agreeably in a period piece. This is a pleasant book, skilfully compiled, with many amusing illustrations from contemporary drawings, and with adequate maps. It is not, and was not meant to be, an imaginative contribution to biographical literature. Mrs. Middleton has done well what she set out to do: to let Baker tell his own story by linking together extracts from his works with the minimum of explanation. L. P. KIRWAN

MAGIC AND DISILLUSION

Ritual Magic By E. M. BUTLER. *Cambridge University Press.* 25s.

This is the second volume of the trilogy that Professor Butler has undertaken to write on the sources and significance of the Faust legend. *The Myth of the Magus* traced that ambiguous figure, the magician, from the sacrificial priest-kings of antiquity to the bogus yet spellbinding figures of Cagliostro, Rasputin, and Madame Blavatsky. The present volume treats, with scholarly thoroughness and a charm of style rare in the annals of works on magic, of the rituals of conjuration that have been used by European magicians.

A study of the documents of ceremonial magic is disenchanting, not so much because one is left in doubt as to whether the conjurations work, —Professor Butler leaves that question unasked— but because of the laughable, not to say tragic, discrepancy between the elaborate and pretentious means, and the all too human ends. The magician, in his robe of white linen woven by a virgin, girded with lion skin and plastered with pentacles, is an essentially undignified figure, his motives base rather than diabolical, his illiterate learning and his trashy marvels calculated to impress only the ignorant. Means so pretentious, serving ends so petty, can surely only be equalled by the applications found in our own day, for the powerful forces that scientific discovery has put in the hands of fools. Marlowe's Faustus planned a Siegfried Line, air transport, fruit out of season, and television just as we have them to-day. Only in the atomic bomb, perhaps, have we outdone the medieval magicians in blasphemous folly.

But human beings, so Professor Butler wisely observes, are more prone to folly than to deliberate wickedness. The evidence for a cult of Satanism is inconsiderable. The imaginations of novelists like A. E. W. Mason and Charles Williams, the vulgar pretentions of the late Aleister Crowley, and the propaganda department of the Roman Church have built up a legend of black masses and devil worship that is not borne out by the documents. The truth is more deplorable, but less sensational. The art of the magician is the constraint of spirits, both evil and elemental, often in the name of God, to obey his command. Prospero who compels Ariel to obey him is not necessarily a Satanist. The more sordid truth is that when the foundations of the earth were shaken and spirits raised from Acheron, the motive was usually money—love seems to have been a very bad second indeed. One knows the frame of mind, of course, and many a pious prayer has followed much the same lines as one quoted in which the Trinity is called upon to prove its omnipotence "here and now" by compelling the devil to hand over the cash—and not fairy gold, that will turn into coal or anything of that sort, but good currency! Here of course we must not forget that the gold of the alchemists had a symbolic as well as a literal meaning, and so it must have had for some, if not all, magicians. Magic may have been, in its esoteric sense, a Freudian catharsis, as against the Jungian sublimation of alchemy. The fiends raised would then be repressed complexes, the purpose of the magician, as of the psychoanalyst, to release while yet controlling them. One is reminded of the howling sojourners in Blake's "furnaces," a hell that the poet understood psychologically. Such questions as these Professor Butler does not raise, and certainly not all magicians would have understood their art symbolically. The magical texts she quotes strike one as deriving only at many removes from the subtle and profound symbolism of the Kabbala. Magic, like other symbolic systems borrowed from the East, took on the stamp of European materialism. And Professor Butler is less concerned with the ultimate nature of magic than with its social manifestations in Europe.

There is latent in magical ceremonies, Professor Butler maintains, the seed of drama, and its ritual seems always about to give birth to some situation comparable to the ancient tragedies that developed from the rites of ancient religions; but the child is still-born, the tragic situation was never developed among the magicians themselves. Actual pacts with the devil were usually unilateral, and the philosophy of the magician was optimistic. Devils, like electricity, could be controlled perfectly well if the apparatus were properly prepared. Curiously enough, the magician becomes a tragic hero in legend alone, when the myth of Satanism, and the selling of his soul to the devil for a term of power, sets him against the sombre background of eternal damnation envisaged by Christian orthodoxy. It would seem therefore that it was not the magicians themselves, but the Christian church, that created the legendary figure of Faust, and gave him his grandeur as a man irrevocably damned. This legend

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spread in sixteenth-century Europe like wildfire, because it was felt to state a great poetic truth.

Poetry, curiously enough, is precisely what magic documents most conspicuously lack. Only in the Greek texts, and the English, do we find that wild, elemental poetry of Jonson and Shakespeare's witches. In the underworld of Christendom it survived as a foul guilty thing, divided from religion and philosophy which in the ancient world lent it dignity and beauty. There is a world of difference between the priest who works to ensure the fertility of the land and the tribe and the magician who conjures in order to locate buried treasure or make a love philtre. The mediumistic piffle obtained by the learned Dr. Dee is all too familiar. The magician is, in any case, an applied scientist. The purists—Gnostics, Kabbalists, alchemists, Rosicrucians—were not the men to value the display of marvels. Even that grubby and bogus character Eliphas Lévi, on being asked why, if he could work magic, he was not a rich man, very sensibly replied that any man wise enough to understand the principles underlying magical powers would be wise enough to desire better things. KATHLEEN RAINE

REFORMATION AND REASON

Erasmus, Tyndale, and More. By W. E. CAMPBELL. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 15*s.*

In Northern Europe the early sixteenth century is one of the great generations of the human mind. The first reformers believed, as few generations have been able to believe, in the sovereignty of reason. If only the Scriptures were more exactly known, thought Erasmus, then the corrupt incrustation of time would be easily detached; and he devoted a lifetime of well-endowed leisure to the task of presenting to scholars clear and accurate texts. If only the Scriptures were more widely known, thought Tyndale, the natural reason of man would grasp their immediate truth, without the interested interposition of priests. "If God spare my life," he told an ignorant priest, "ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scriptures than thou dost"; and he devoted a lifetime of persecuted wandering to producing his greatest monument—the English Bible. If only reason were allowed freely to operate, thought Sir Thomas More, the patristic tradition would appear ultimately more rational than the untempered learning of the pure scholar, the hasty judgment of the ploughboy. In an age when learning seemed to offer the key to the world, its exponents assumed an almost giant stature. Nor did they starve. Kings and Cardinals patronised Erasmus; More became Lord Chancellor; and even Tyndale drew a fortunate income from his English Bible, which the Bishop of London bought up in gross, to burn. Unfortunately the age of reason was short. Within a generation black clouds of bigotry had descended and almost blotted it out; More and Tyndale were martyred, Erasmus eclipsed; and even now we can only study freely these great figures when the pitchy or incense-dripping clouds are momentarily parted.

Mr. W. E. Campbell prefers the clouds. He was first inspired, he says, by a sermon of Cardinal Gasquet, urging "that no better service could be rendered to religion and sound learning than by editing for publication" the documents of this period. Cardinal Gasquet is perhaps a dubious model. Certainly he was adept at "editing for publication"—among scholars he is now only remembered for his unscrupulous falsification of texts. Later Mr. Campbell acquired a black-letter edition of More's *English Works*, which for a while he verbally fondles. These, with other scholars, he has edited, and edited well. He even claims that they "henceforth gave their own *forma substantialis* to most of my thought and writing." This is a large claim, which readers may judge; but in other respects these two experiences have certainly left their trace on this book. Mr. Campbell writes rather as a propagandist and a collector than as a scholar or a thinker. His scholarship is copious rather than exact or impartial. "The Church has always taught . . ." is his most regular intellectual comment. The book is written in a spirit of profound, not to say abject piety: it is full of somewhat lachrymose romanticism about the Age of Faith; and inconvenient evidence is often conveniently ignored.

The rest follows naturally. Mr. Campbell dotes on More, cherishes Erasmus in a patronising, "understanding" way, and deplores Tyndale, the presence of whose inscribed name in the dome of the British Museum Reading Room causes him pious pain. There are certain difficulties, of course. As a philosopher More advocated toleration; as Chancellor he burnt heretics. After some hesitation Mr. Campbell explains the matter satisfactorily. The saint properly distinguished, he says, between a Catholic and a non-Catholic State. "In a Catholic State he believed that all manifestations of heresy should be treated as seditious, with the severe penalties that were customary in every Catholic country at that time. But in a State that was not Catholic he believed that religious toleration was not merely expedient but a matter of just necessity." It is well known that Roman Catholics believe in persecution when they have control of government and toleration when they are in a minority. They are not usually so imprudent as to admit it. To prove Erasmus a perfect Roman Catholic is also a little difficult at times; but Mr. Campbell tries hard. Sustained (in default of evidence) by faith, hope and a Spanish Jesuit he even maintains that he died in the arms of a priest. The fact that Pope Paul IV afterwards condemned his name with peculiar spite and forbade the reading of any of his works, whether sacred or secular, he judiciously does not mention. Tyndale, of course, gives him a good deal of pain. The whole Reformation, he believes, was "an undesirable catastrophe," and Tyndale, "we can but fear," must bear much of the responsibility for it. And the tragedy is that it could have been prevented! If only Tyndale had had some older friend to guide him, "say, an understanding priest or some member of a religious order, experienced in the ways of prayer"; if only he had retired to a monastery, "or perhaps to an even greater seclusion, like St. Jerome. . . ." Thus, thinks Mr. Campbell, England might have been saved from the "catastrophe" of becoming a Protestant country in which Catholics must confine their demands to toleration.

In this book there is evidence of labour, learning and devotion; but its conclusion is infinitely dispiriting. It suggests that Roman Catholics have simply given up the attempt to think. Erasmus, More and Tyndale were thinkers, and the issues on which they wrote and differed were significant intellectual issues. Mr. Campbell sadly discards Tyndale and appropriates More and Erasmus as if they were collectors' bric-à-brac, with interesting superficial variations, to be declared authentic after all and placed piously in the shop-window of the dingy and depleted antique store of modern Catholicism. Erasmus believed in the sovereignty of the intellect, and for that reason, in the age of St. Ignatius, with his *sacrificio dell' intelletto*, the whole artillery of obscurantism was directed against his memory. He was officially declared "an incorrigible heretic," "a sacrilegious blasphemer," "worse than Luther." Mr. Campbell ignores all this. To him every great name that he can use as a Catholic mascot is worth collecting. "Should we be far wrong," he asks, "in presuming that both St. Ignatius and Erasmus were raised up by God to render valuable but very different services to the Church?" The purposes of God are notoriously erratic, and it is perhaps unwise to presume them; but when opposite ideas are said to be complementary after all, then indeed the human mind has become bankrupt. H. R. TREVOR-ROPER

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> I called my press agent in New York. "Dick," I said, "I want to hire a couple of thousand pounds of peerage as dancing partners."

The tempo, the smugness and the puns, are sometimes irritating; it is rather like reading a music-hall comedian's patter, but entertainment can be guaranteed.

Unlike most columnists specialising in show-business, who are tired grey things suffering from occupational ulcers inflamed by gulping pink gins, B. Rose appears to have infinite zest. His mood is one of constant elation—like those enviable cases of chronic hypomania about whom we read in textbooks of psychiatry. There are plenty of external reasons why he should be so cheerful. He sits on top of his world, making a lot of money and having a lot of fun. He is ecstatically married to Miss Eleanor Holm, the swimming champion with the perfect measurements. An idyllic union this; it seems to be the nearest approach in real life to the crackling connubial bliss of Mr. and Mrs. Nick Charles in the *Thin Man* saga. Of its early stages he tells us: "The romance which followed was composed of the usual ingredients—fried shrimps, Chanel No. 5, big telephone bills, and an old Russ Colombo record of 'I'll see you in my dreams.' We had only one tiff and that was about how much chlorine to use in a swimming pool."

There are moments when he is so self-satisfied, and so awful, that one feels like pricking him down as a living advertisement for the American Way of Life, a licensed mannikin whose job it is to prove to the suckers that it is really possible to have a wonderful time all the time. To do so would be most unjust. This bustling, chubby little night bird has his serious side. He refuses to subscribe to that insidious sentimentalising over the underworld begun by Damon Runyon: "Every now and then the papers print a piece about what a great place Broadway was back in the Twenties. Don't believe an adjective of it. Broadway during Prohibition was as glamorous as a thumb in the eye and those of us who were mixed up in it are lucky to still be in one piece." He also exhibits several unmistakably progressive symptoms and pipes up boldly against colour prejudice. Whether he has any deep social significance as a phenomenon of the Truman era I leave to you to discover. He can be easily labelled. He belongs, together with the Marx brothers and Perelman and several more, to that New York group of clever Jewish entertainers who have a real sense of satire. They are a specifically American phenomenon which unfortunately has no counterpart over here.

What possessed Dali to illustrate Rose's extravert patter passes conjecture. The animated *roses à la Grand ville*, and the hair-cream-ad faces of Mr. and Mrs. R. traced from photographs, are dismal in the extreme.

MAURICE RICHARDSON

NEW NOVELS

Seven Days in New Crete. By ROBERT GRAVES. *Cassell.* 9s. 6d.

On a Dark Night. By ANTHONY WEST. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 10s. 6d.

The Impossible Shore. By ROBERT KEE. *Eyre & Spottiswoode* 9s. 6d.

The first two novels under review are alike in dealing with subjects—the future, and life after death—about which we have little authentic information. Even when one reaches them, it appears, they are pretty puzzling, and since the common material of mortal humanity is quite puzzling enough, those writers who step outside it run into peculiar difficulties.

Mr. Graves evades them for a time by employing a fairy-tale blandness about the extraordinary, and by a style which, in a book which has a good deal to say about magic and witchcraft, is itself an exercise in their employment. (Opening this book for the first time without realising who was the author, I read the first sentence and almost dropped it in my anxiety to find out. Yet it would be hard to say why it struck me in this way.) Moreover the New Cretan civilisation, in which Edward Venn-Thomas finds himself invoked by witchcraft, is not so unfamiliar as it appears at first sight. The people whom Edward meets, beautiful, gentle and good, without machinery, neurosis or a sense of humour, ruled by custom and gnomic rhymes, are easily recognisable as inhabitants of the Golden Age. And this, in fact, is what they are, for the Golden Age—a civilisation depending upon magic, ritual and caste—has been deliberately recreated by a sophisticated and neurotic humanity. At first a delicate exotic in the old nursery soil of Crete, it has flourished and triumphed, and Edward's evocation is a display of its characteristic power. Edward finds nice people with nice manners (apart from ritual murder) and a world freed from suffering. Why should he have been summoned at all? What is wrong with New Crete that he finds it is his function to put right?

The answer is that people have become happy, but insipid, and Edward's role is to make them once again troublesome and interesting. All the difficulties which Mr. Graves has evaded are on us at once. Does this happiness and insipidity of his New Cretans imply a necessary connection between happiness and insipidity? There is no answer, because little as we may know about ourselves, we know less about them. In our present age there is plenty of suffering, and we may take a more acute interest in the dangers of its absence when the attacks launched upon it by Freud and Lenin have achieved more success than they are doing at present. Mr. Graves's point of view is in more than one sense out of date, and while his urbane high spirits may have foxed us for a little, that is because we are not accustomed to see the arguments of Nietszche put forward politely nor the forebodings of Lord Elton clad in gaiety. In any case, Mr. Graves has made his creation too agreeable, and while he could make any line of thought attractive, he cannot make the insipidity of New Crete convincing.

Mr. West has treated some of the same questions as Mr. Graves, and has stepped outside normal human life to do so, but the tone of *On a Dark Night* could hardly be more different from that of *Seven Days in New Crete*. It is charged with moral repulsion and physical disgust. "Heaven" as the Glaswegian said on looking round what he mistakenly believed to be his destination, "is verra' little improvement on Glesca,'" and the British legal Colonel who shoots himself after a War Trial finds that he is not only still linked to the German General he has helped to hang, but moving in a world where concentration camps and Thought Police are not the worst horrors. He finds that he must choose between

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fighting on over the guilt-haunted battlefield of human personality, or giving up, crossing the river, abandoning hope and fear for an existence of Côte d'Azur frivolity. Temptations are provided. Wallis has a weakness for fast cars; he is given an Alfa-Romeo. He likes girls; there is an elegant redhead. But an Alfa-Romeo and a redhead in the after-life raise some of the peculiar difficulties of which I have spoken. Fast driving has been Wallis's "favourite drug": surely the efficacy of this drug depends partly upon the possibility (considerable at speeds of over a hundred miles an hour) of going through a stone wall? And what can we understand about an existence in which the physical sanctions of driving a car through a stone wall are unknown? Or about making love, on the other side of the iron gates? In reading another writer on this subject, these questions might remain merely irksome, but Mr. West forces them on his reader's attention by his own emphasis on the physical horrors of dissolution. It is the hanging of General Kenelm which is the immediate cause of Wallis's suicide, and it is the disgusting sight (and smell—some of the details about hanging which don't appear in the newspapers are given) of the dead body which Mr. West chooses to push this home. Hanging is, of course, an obscene method of execution, but it seems to me only a minor part of the horror of capital punishment. Mr. West's insistence upon it underlines his failure to provide an adequate physical system for the after-life which he pictures. The point is worth making at some length, because Mr. West displays not only imagination and force, but also an ingenuity about plot which is basic to the novelist's art, but which many contemporary novelists have not got, or find too difficult to exercise, and this ingenuity should be directed, among other things, to avoiding the difficulties into which less talented novelists cannot help blundering. His book is, however, interesting, character emerges from a complicated pattern of action, and his method is naturally and easily dramatic. If one cannot in the end say that the idea of the novel is worked out with success, Mr. West has at any rate put up a worthy fight against that singularly tough and elusive opponent, the meaning of human life.

From life after death to the Soviet Zone of Germany is not a long step. The two British officers who, in 1945, try to beat the repatriation guns after their camp has been liberated by the Russians (the impossible shore is the Elbe) are, like Wallis, in the hands of a baffling and casual omnipotence. Their journey is like one of those intricate Russian dances, in which the Russian with whom they are partnered may be, at any moment, a Westernised political, a Chekhovian comic, or a mongolian sub-man. It is a vivid picture, which reads like a first-class piece of reporting, but as a novel it suffers from the shadowiness of the main characters, who are types of British officer rather than people. They struck me also as being rather deliberately clueless about the Russians. It does not take first-class writing to make us realise that Russians are not very easily understood by average British officers, and although the bewilderment of the more sensitive of the two is conveyed with point and feeling, I question whether this bewilderment should not have been left, by an imaginative writer, to the journalists who certainly cannot be blamed for neglecting it.

J. D. SCOTT

A GREAT AND GRACIOUS LADY

Abigail Adams. By JANET WHITNEY. *Harrap.* 15*s.*

Mrs. Whitney has written a book that builds charm upon real learning. Abigail Adams was the wife of John Adams, the second President of the United States, and the mother of the fifth President, John Quincy Adams. She was at once an able and enchanting person. A great housewife, full of courage and common sense and insight, she is like no other American woman of the eighteenth century in her unchallengeable right to Steele's famous phrase, "To know her is to love her, and to love her is a liberal education." She is equally attractive, whether as the wife of a struggling young lawyer in Massachusetts, or standing alone, when John Adams was off to the Continental Congress, or to Paris or the Hague or London in the service of the infant Republic, or as the wife of the first Vice-President, who was to succeed Washington and find, at his right hand, a lover as young in spirit, and as quick in eager imagination, as when she went to marry him from Parson Smith's house.

I think Mrs. Whitney has painted a living portrait of a great lady. She has not only had the good fortune to have had access to new Adams material from that only partly revealed treasure-house of manuscripts jealously guarded in Boston; she has known how to make skilful and persuasive use of it. The result is the inevitable one that Mrs. Whitney has fallen in love with Mrs. Adams, and written about her as an ardent friend might write about a woman whose power of mind is only equalled by its delicacy, and whose genius for feeling is only surpassed by her sensitiveness to the emotions of others. One's gratitude to Mrs. Whitney would have been unmitigated were it not that she has been tempted by the enchantress into two excessive pieces of partisanship. She makes John Adams far more attractive, even far more able, than he was. There is not enough sign in her portrait of him of his vanity, his rather sour solemnity, his touchiness, and—a thing from which no Adams was ever really free—the conscious assumption that the Adamses were a special and superior species of the genus *homo sapiens.* The second defect is that, in her loyalty to Abigail Adams, whose marvellous epistolary conflict with Jefferson she describes with brilliant pungency, she does far less than justice to the strong case to be made against John Adams and for Jefferson. It really will not do to forget, first, that Jefferson never unmasked the full power of his artillery fire against a lady for whom he had so deep and affectionate an admiration, especially where the result would have been a vital attack upon Mrs. Adams's husband, and, second, that, despite all Mrs. Whitney's ardent special pleading, nothing can defend the monstrous Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, all four of which were applied as relentlessly as though the F.B.I. and the Un-American Activities Committee were in charge of them. Nothing, either, can defend the "midnight appointments" of President Adams at the moment when Jefferson was about to enter the White House. Mrs. Adams's attempt to excuse them, if brilliant, is still specious; and not all Mrs. Whitney's affection for her heroine can justify her applause for the excuse, almost a century and a half after the event.

Yet that is part of the magic of Abigail Adams. You fall in love with her when you first meet, as Mrs. Whitney did, to her great credit, and, thenceforward you are as helplessly her creature as was Mr. Darcy the creature of the second Miss Bennett. Her relations with her husband were exquisite; as a parent she was nothing less than a great artist; as the wife of a great revolutionary she had all the qualities for which he could have asked; and as the wife of an outstanding Ambassador and a distinguished President she combined the appropriate dignity with a human simplicity it is impossible not to admire. She had a clear and imaginative mind, cultivated, penetrating, and with a genuine sense of humour which her husband never possessed. Her letters are among the classics of their art; I do not think that she need yield pre-eminence even to such great practitioners as Madame de Sévigné or Madame du Deffand. One of the best features of Mrs. Whitney's book is the great skill with which she allows Mrs. Adams to speak for herself. The result is that she comes to life in all that vigorous, yet graceful, eagerness to taste experience to the full which makes her by so far the most attractive American woman of her time.

I venture to add one remark which is, perhaps, itself a piece of special pleading. No portrait in Mrs. Whitney's work is better delineated than that of John Quincy Adams; and it is evident

from the admirable extracts Mrs. Whitney gives from his Diary that she knows intimately that inexhaustible treasury of insight into its period. Cannot Mrs. Whitney, who has now entered the *arcanum imperii* of the Adams papers, persuade their present custodian to let us have a new and complete edition of the Diary? At present, it is terribly expensive and most difficult to find; it is also incomplete. If Mrs. Whitney could get us a reasonably priced edition, she would make all of us even more deeply her debtors than we are for this attractive book of her own. The more unduly she uses the magic of her influence, the more deep will be our gratitude to her for a great service.

HAROLD J. LASKI

ROMANTICISM IS SO ROMANTIC

A New Romantic Anthology. Edited by HENRY TREECE and STEFAN SCHIMANSKI. *Grey Walls Press.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The romantic always wants to be somewhere else, and things to be otherwise. He cannot accept the actual because he is ill-adapted to the external world—estranged from or hostile to things and persons and institutions. Behind his creative impulse lies a need to discover and embrace a lost or an unheard-of reality. And the emphasis is not on what is sought, but on himself the seeker. The classic artist takes his creative activity for granted: he affirms his aesthetic without defence or self-congratulation because its social utility allows him to be perfectly confident of its validity. But the romantic is an outcast and must somehow justify a life dedicated to the egocentric business of *self*-expression. So he claims that his activity is the fulfilment of a divine mission, and thanks God for the grace that has predestined him to be a Romantic. Romanticism, in short, "is aesthetic Calvinism," as Mr. Connolly once wrote in these columns. His definition is emphatically confirmed by most of the essays which occupy a half of this *New Romantic Anthology*—it is, incidentally, not a new Romantic Anthology but a New-Romantic anthology.

> If Classicism is the mask, Realism is the face behind the mask. But Romanticism is the soaring spirit, that spark of the Creator, which will flash one day out of the tired eyes, to glimpse and enjoy the paradise that God intended.

Thus the Editors, having succumbed to the temptation which visits all Calvinists—to worship not their God but their Faith, and in it themselves. They are in love with Romanticism for its own sake: they are meta-romantics, romanticising about Romanticism.

Inevitably, their attitude precludes any accurate evaluation, or even characterisation, of the new romantic movement in English letters. The criticism in this anthology is on a level with the club bore's hundredth recital of the tale of an old battle in which he or some ancestor took part. It is much too possessive, going something like this. First, an assault on the political ideology of the Auden group. Then:

> It was inevitable that a reaction should set in and stress be laid upon personal as opposed to sociological values; that emphasis should be placed upon the unfettered growth and development of the human spirit. Poetry acquired thereby a more fruitful field of operation; enriched itself by claiming purposefully a new liberty and a new dimension . . . the inward and spiritual life of man was realised afresh to be of more ultimate value than the finest schemes of Marxist dialectical materialism.

This is not a parody; it is reprinted from page 54 of this book. The naive—or disingenuous—half-truths and over-simplifications are too numerous to be catalogued: it is enough to point out that an acceptance of Marxism and an interest in technology did not prevent Mr. Auden from writing some of the best love-poems in the English language (but perhaps love is too collectivist an activity, perhaps one must verbalise onanistic fantasies in order to reflect the "inward and spiritual life of man"?). This apart, the passage cited betrays an inclination, constant throughout this anthology, to treat the new Romanticism as the deliberate expression of a conscious philosophy and political attitude. Perhaps it was this for the founders of the New Apocalypse. But are we to believe the same of the Welsh adolescent genius who created the movement years before it was organised and supplied with a doctrine by literary cliques in London and Glasgow? Every modern poet has tried to move out of isolation into contact with something greater than himself. The American emigrants sought to integrate themselves with the Mediterranean cultural tradition, the Oxford Leftists with the living masses. Dylan Thomas and Vernon Watkins tried to overcome their isolation by identifying themselves with a personal myth rooted in regional folk-cultures. Thus their way corresponded with an anarchist ideal, but it was not a belief in political anarchism that impelled them to take it. They took it because they had to. And it is precisely to tell us why a writer did what he had to do that literary criticism exists. Of the thirteen critical studies in this anthology, only two justify their existence: one by Herbert Read—which is a reprint—and the other by Maurice Lindsay. The rest are sermons suitable for complacent converts.

As to creative writing, the selection is catholic. But the absence of Messrs. Barker, Durrell, Gascoyne, Graham, Keyes and Sansom leaves the Editors' intention "to show how widely spread is the Romantic attitude in British writing to-day" some way short of fulfilment.

DAVID SYLVESTER

SENSIBLE ECONOMICS

Problems of Economic Planning: Papers on Planning and Economics. By E. F. M. DURBIN. *Routledge.* 15*s.*

The death of Evan Durbin last year was a calamity: it lost us a combination of qualities that we can ill spare—good powers of analytical thought and an eminently sensible outlook on affairs, combined with a deep intellectual honesty and an immense fund of democratic goodwill. As an economist, Durbin was unusually ready to learn and to admit his own mistakes; and his later economic writings—up to the point at which he was interrupted by the practical tasks, first of war, and then of office—were a great advance on what he had produced in his earlier, more theory-dominated phase. I knew him from his student days, and worked with him for a good many years in the Fabian Society; and over all that time he was feeling his way towards an integration both of abstract with what is miscalled "applied" Economics, and of Economics with the other cognate social studies, especially Social Psychology. The big book which he had hoped to write on the Economics of Democratic Socialism, as a companion to his *Politics of Democratic Socialism*, we must now do without; but, in its absence, this volume of collected essays, some printed for the first time but mostly taken from journals, is all the more welcome. Evan Durbin collected these essays himself and got them ready for publication just before his fatal accident; and they now appear with a foreword by the Prime Minister, with whom he was working closely as economic adviser before he was given office in the Government.

The essays are of unequal merit, and of varying appeal. But only one of them is so technical as to present difficulties to non-economists, and most of them are well and simply written for the intelligent general reader. To the extent to which they have a general theme, they are a defence of democratic planning against the anti-planners such as Professor Hayek, and at the same time an insistence that economic planning not only need not, but must not, dispense with forms of economic calculation that will ensure a broad correspondence of production with the consumers' wants. This, Durbin argues, involves a pricing and costing mechanism, to be used as a criterion of the best distribution of productive resources, subject only to the need for the democracy to reach collective decisions about its demand for certain essential services, such as education and

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defence. Much more simply, but no less effectively, than most of his fellow-economists who have taken a socialist line, he disposes of the contention that a socialist society cannot in the nature of things follow a rational pricing policy. In another essay, discussing the problems of the socialised sector, he has much wise counsel to offer about the dangers of over-centralisation, of which his wartime experience in the public service made him increasingly aware; and both in this essay and elsewhere he throws out wise hints about the study of human relations in industry—particularly with reference to the strength of non-economic motives among those which determine the success of economic structures. Yet another essay embodies a most temperate, but acute, criticism of civil service practices in administration; and at the end comes a sequence of essays dealing mainly with the method and scope of economic studies and the right lines of advance in economic research.

Altogether, this is a stimulating book, and it makes one sorrier than ever that its author was taken away at the very beginning of showing what he could do with his fully developed powers. I often disagreed strongly with Durbin's earlier writings; but I can say of this book, not only that I disagree with it much less, but that it makes me see where I sometimes went wrong in disagreeing when I did. G. D. H. COLE.

LEONARDO'S HARMONIES

Paragone: A Comparison of the Arts. By LEONARDO DA VINCI. Translated and edited by Irma Richter. *Oxford.* 18*s.*

To-day, perhaps, the old game of the "comparison of the arts" has rather lost its savour, reduced by generations of logic-chopping to an academic principle. Certainly we don't *theorise* about it as previous centuries have done, and neither do we, so to speak, *practise* it. There is no relationship between Picasso and Stravinsky, except in the sense that the former has moved from classicism to barbarism, while the latter has moved from a sophisticated barbarism towards classicism. Joyce offers a certain simple comparison with music which goes no further than the surface sound of words, and Mr. Eliot's *Four Quartets* borrow only the semblance of sonata-form from music. There is a movement towards a literary romanticism among the younger English painters, but in general one may say that there is little to-day which corresponds to Mallarmé's attempt to "*achever la symphonie*," Debussy's to create a sort of musical Monet, or Whistler's to paint in terms of music.

Yet from the time of that Greek Voltaire, Simonides, until Mallarmé, artists and æstheticians have loved to play the game. "Painting is dumb poetry and poetry is speaking painting," wrote Simonides, and the Greek and Roman philosophers argued the point endlessly. The Renaissance, with its interest in Order and Harmony, inquired into the relationships of the arts from no purely abstract purpose, but rather as an attempt to define the æsthetic protocol. The idea spread to England, where Sidney wrote of poetry as a "speaking picture," and Shakespeare presented the Allegory of Fortune in *Timon of Athens* through the eyes of a poet and a painter; but the seventeenth century no longer seemed interested in such theories, perhaps because the Baroque was a unifying style which brought poetry, music, painting and architecture together in a perfect "paragone," and protocol was not needed. It was the eighteenth century, the Silver Age of the Renaissance, which returned to the old inquiry. Lessing insisted that an art must be itself-alone and not produce something with the aid of another art, and in an interesting passage in the *Laokoön* he says that the painter and the poet may have the same end in view, but must arrive at it by different means; a poet may progress gradually from the source to the end, a painter must concentrate all into a single moment in such a way as to imply the rest. With A. W. Schlegel, the romantic, the confusion returns; apart from his celebrated remark on music and architecture, his work contains sentences like, "The Homeric epic is, in poetry, what bas-relief is in sculpture, and tragedy the distinct isolated group." Nineteenth-century criticism is peppered with similar remarks (Coleridge, echoing Schlegel, called Gothic architecture "petrified religion"). All the arts during the Romantic Revival were busy expressing themselves in terms of each other, but romanticism, unlike the baroque, brought only a chaotic unity. Pater's fluting voice of calm protest was misunderstood. By saying that all art aspires to the condition of music he allowed his readers to overlook that a few pages before he had written, "It is the mistake of much popular criticism to regard poetry, music and painting . . . as but translations into different languages of one and the same fixed quantity of imaginative thought."

Leonardo's *Paragone* has been out of print for some time, and this new scholarly edition is to be welcomed; any morsel of his writing which will reveal a little more of a man as mysterious as his own ineffable St. Anne is to be welcomed, and the book has primarily this personal interest. We are apt to worship Leonardo as the perfect flower of Humanism, but what deprivations do we not owe to that vast curiosity which Freud ingeniously traced back to the sexual problems of his childhood! A few observations less on the precise nature of the Deluge and we might have had another *Madonna of the Rocks*, no fantastic inventions and another Ginevra Benci. Perhaps he knew he was dissipating his genius when he noted in his journal "O Leonardo, why do you toil so hard?" Painting, he knew, was his own art, and in spite of his practise of most of the others the *Paragone* is a partisan attempt to place Painting at the head of the Liberal Arts. "Do you not know that our soul is composed of harmony, and that harmony is only produced when proportions of things are heard or seen simultaneously?" he says to prove that poetry, since its effects are consecutive, is inferior to painting. Again he insists that less praise is due to the poet than to the painter because the poet's material is an accidental medium created by man (i.e., words) while the painter's is Nature herself, and Nature is enclosed within the surfaces only of *shapes*.

It is certainly odd, while reading these pages, to realise how unprofoundly Leonardo thought of his own art and its relationship to the others. There is hardly a statement in the book which a skilled logician could not turn inside out. That is not necessarily a criticism, but writing on the arts which is to have any universal significance should hardly grind an axe so persistently as Leonardo's. The truth is that the *Paragone* should not be read in the line of succession from Aristotle and Horace or of predecession from Lessing and Pater. It was Leonardo's "minimum working hypothesis"; he believed painting to be the greatest of the arts, therefore it was. He was not content, like the old Michelangelo, who thought talk of the "place" of the arts utterly futile, to remain content with a personal, unspoken, unrecorded certainty of the greatness of his art; that elementary force of his genius, curiosity (the phrase is Pater's), made him rationalise his certainty on to paper. In this way we learn more about Leonardo than about æsthetic truth. Which is all to the good.

Miss Irma Richter, whose father edited the *Literary Works* of Leonardo, has printed her most readable translation by the side of the Italian text, and has produced some fascinating—if not always entirely relevant—annotations as well as scholarly commentaries on the various parts.

MICHAEL SWAN

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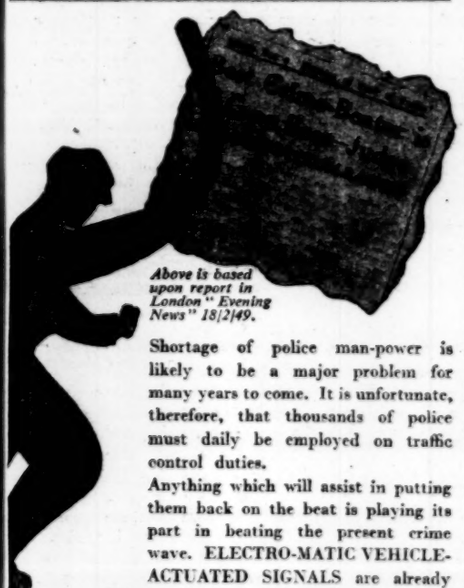

Above is based upon report in London "Evening News" 18/2/49.

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A Vaquero of the Brush Country. By J. Frank Dobie. *Hammond.* 15*s.*

The Texas cowhands, or *vaqueros*, were often remarkable men. But life in the brush country at the end of the last century did not train them in autobiography. One of them, John Young, has now been helped out by Professor Dobie, who has already given us a string of books on Texan life and manners. Mr. Young told Mr. Dobie the facts; Mr. Dobie supplemented them by his own research; the reader is offered a biography, the more readable because it is written in the first person. From this collaboration has come a book which describes faithfully and in detail the way the Texas cowhand lived in the days when the range was still unfenced, when the cattle were driven north up the Chisholm Trail, and when the Mexican border was alive with bandits, rustlers and vigilantes. It is a fascinating story, which loses nothing because it ambles rather than gallops, giving much the same emphasis to stock records, to the razor-back hogs, to cattle wars and outlaws. For from it emerges a picture of the cowhand which is more authentic than the romantic stereotype of the movies and the Wild West novel. It is full of odd information. Here we have a digression on cattle brands, another on using a Colt revolver or the virtues of the bandana. Mr. Dobie or Mr. Young, for one cannot be sure which of them it is, talks about the psychology of the steer or the bad habits of the Mexicans in much the same tone of voice. This book, in fact, portrays its origin on every page. It is as if one is sitting in a bar, somewhere in Texas, listening to an old cowhand talk on and on about his life. Mr. Dobie has written it all down and polished it up a little. But even if it is doubtful whether a true *vaquero* would start quoting Mirabeau, Mr. Dobie has been a good Boswell.

Illustrated English Social History. Vol. 1. Chaucer's England and Early Tudors. By G. M. Trevelyan. *Longmans.* 18*s.*

This, the first of four illustrated volumes of Professor Trevelyan's celebrated *History* covers the period from Chaucer's England to the early Tudors; it also contains the Introduction to the original complete edition. The illustrations, which have been selected by Ruth C. Wright, consist partly of gravure, partly of colour plates and partly of illustrations in the text. There is also a map of Chaucer's London. The illustrations are of great intrinsic interest and are strictly relevant to the matters dealt with in the text. Many are reproductions of originals which are in the British Museum and the National Gallery; others are photographs of surviving medieval buildings, streets and interiors, others, again, reproductions of playbills, book illustrations, caricatures and advertisements. There are also portraits of famous people. A series of full descriptive notes gives particulars of the sources of the illustrations and describes the scenes they depict. The great merit of Professor Trevelyan's work was that it gave the lay reader an insight into the manners and customs of the Middle Ages and conveyed the texture of peoples lives. It was obvious that the success of such an undertaking would be enormously enhanced by appropriate illustrations, and these are wholly appropriate.

Week-end Competitions

No. 1,027

Set by G. De Vavasour

The usual prizes are offered for a 12-line Epilogue in rhymed couplets, to be spoken before the curtain (in the traditional manner) by one of the characters, for any play by Ibsen, Strindberg, Eugene O'Neill, Chekhov, or Maugham. Entries by November 1st.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 1,024

Set by Naomi Lewis

The usual prizes are offered for a publisher's blurb (rendered into modern English) for the dust-cover of the first edition of one of the following: *The Odyssey*; Aesop's *Fables*; The *Canterbury Tales*; Macchiavelli's *Prince*; More's *Utopia*; Dante's *Inferno*; St. Augustine's *Confessions*; Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, or any single play by Shakespeare. Limit 150 words.

Report by Naomi Lewis

A large entry, with Homer and Chaucer as clear favourites. Dante, More and St. Augustine, one must conclude, had difficulty in finding a publisher. Even then, it was announced with regret that the first edition of *Utopia* "must be restricted to the Latin text for the use of intellectuals and cultural workers." (W. R. Moss). A critic calls the *Inferno*: "a *divine* comedy" (Stanley Sharpless); another says of the *Confessions*: "No one can afford to miss this man who has God's ear" (James Y. Finlayson). Shakespeare had better publicity. "Discriminating readers know that a 'W.S.' play stands for a gripping, full-of-action story," writes K. M. Hamilton. Available at last is his *Titus Andronicus*, "the play that shocked London! Now published for the first time in book form" (R. J. Hedge); his *Macbeth*, "a profound psychological study of a little man who dared to be great" (Derek Barnard). "The detailed recipe for Witches' Broth," adds Jill Waterhouse, "will delight those seeking for unusual fare." As for *Hamlet*, "No expense was spared in obtaining the script ... two shorthand writers being present on the first night, and a well-known thief being employed to make off with a prompt copy." (Edward Blishen). Its author, moreover, "Has taken the crude figures of a Nordic legend and transformed them, with consummate skill, into living persons in whose words and deeds Mr. Everyman will recognise his own ageless humanity." (Steve.) Orders should be placed now for the *Canterbury Tales*, by "a distinguished civil servant with an extensive repertoire of midmorning ale yarns." (B. H. Whyte.) "... utterly fearless. 'Here is God's plenty'—Mr. Dryden in *Future*" (P. K.)

But the greatest library run, I foresee, will be on Mr. Homer's thrilling yarn. "'Epic' is the only word for it" (Hackpen). "There are softer inter-

PERSONAL

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PERSONAL—continued

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PERSONAL—continued

FRANCE: Attractive propositions as paying guests in families, Paris, South, etc. Winter Sports programme in preparation. Mrs. Marion Guild, 119 Windsor House, Victoria St., London, S.W.1.

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

THE Development of Europe's Economy.—Important six-page supplement, by a Geneva Correspondent; also Ronald Chamberlain, M.P., on Czechoslovakia; D. N. Pritt, K.C., M.P., on the Czechoslovak Lawyers' Congress; Germany and the People's Democracies; Rumanian Agrarian Reform, etc. New Central European Observer, 3*d.*

DID you tell your friends about that "terrifically daring" book? Jean-Paul Sartre's "Intimacy," published only last week, is already a conversation piece. Of all booksellers or 10*s.* post free: Peter Nevill, 50 Old Brompton Rd. S.W.7.

ADAM International Review current issue includes "Venice & Trieste in Literature," Marc Chagall by Paul Eluard, "How Saint-Exupery Died." October issue entirely devoted to "Chopin in England." November marks 200th issue. Obtainable either specimen copies (2*s.*) or annual subscriptions (20*s.*) from 28 Emperors Gate, London, S.W.7.

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ludes, too," adds this scribe, "notably with the lovely immortal, Calypso, and Nausicaa, the Princess Charming of Phaeacia." "No wandering minstrel can afford to miss this scroll." (A. Gooch). Honorable mentions to Hackpen, Derek Barnard, K. M. Hamilton, Ashton Hubbard, Richard S. Hall, Sam Webb, Evelyn Bazalgette, R. J. Hedge, Thomas Chitty, L. C. B. Seaman, Douglas Hawson, Francis Drake, Jill Waterhouse, B. H. Whyte, Finn M'Cool, E. F. C. and a special commendation to T. T. Ormandy. Two guineas are awarded to L. E. J., and a guinea each to Rosemounde, Edward Blishen, J. C. B. Date, L. G. Udall.

THE ODYSSEY

When "Homer's" first novel, *The Wrath of Achilles*, became an all-time best-seller (with no fewer than 23 written copies and got by heart by well over a hundred minstrels), critics said "never again." *Odysseus Goes Home* should make them eat their words. The gifted author (who still prefers to use a pseudonym) has this time taken as his (or her?) subject the adventures of General Odysseus and a handful of officers and N.C.O.s who, de-mobbed after the fall of Troy, were persistently baffled in their attempt to return home by the arch-crook, Poseidon. Needless to say, the wily General, aided by the Lady Pallas, finally out-witted him. Here is the whole stuff of adventure: shipwrecks, *femmes fatales*, one-eyed toughs, plot and counterplot, with a happy ending and an unexceptionable moral. If Penelope, Circe, Calypso, Polyphemus and the Siren sisters do not become household words, we shall eat our fillets. L. E. J.

The myriads who enjoyed Mr. Homer's best-selling war-story, *The Iliad*, will turn eagerly to this sequel, which relates the adventures of a returning soldier and his difficulties in adjusting himself to the circumstances of peace. Admirers of *The Iliad* will be delighted to find the many colourful episodes again depicted with the raciness of language and narrative skill displayed in that masterpiece. Women readers will also be fascinated by this new work, for much of it is devoted to the problems of the soldier's wife, who awaits his return, and the feminine adroitness with which she handles her many insistent admirers. Readers of an inquiring turn of mind will find piquancy in the fact that Mr. "Homer" still refuses to disclose his identity or even to reveal whether or not he is, as some able critics claim to have discovered, a group of brilliant collaborators. J. C. B. Date

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"These tales are delicious—with one exception"—*Millers' Magazine.*

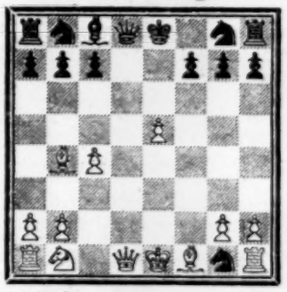
Also in our special Monastery edition: can be slipped inside any missal. Edward Blishen

Just who *are* the people who travel down to Canterbury? Is the road as safe as some would have us to believe? How much does it cost to be a pilgrim? Are they any better, or any worse, than the rest of us?

For the first time a truly reliable account has been collated by Mr. Geoffrey Chaucer. Not unknown in the City, he brings his descriptive talent and honest judgment down to the dusty roads of Kent. Travelling as a pilgrim himself he has mingled with all classes from nuns to Knights and faithfully tells us all about them. That there is laughter as well as prayer on pilgrimage Mr. Chaucer's quill adequately proclaims. Those who have pondered on making the pilgrimage will find that this book will help them to make up their minds.

L. G. Udall

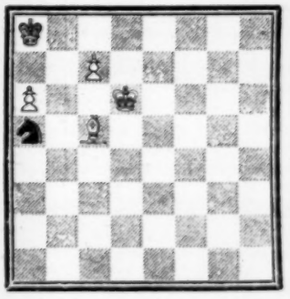
CHESS: Knight-errant Unerring



No, it is *not* a printer's error. That Kt in White's camp *is* Black. How did he get there? Quite simply and legitimately in the 7th move of an "Albin Counter Gambit" (incidentally a variation indicated by Lasker in 1893.)

(1) P-Q4	P-Q4	(5) B-Q2	P x KP
(2) P-QB4	P-K4	(6) B x B ?	P x P ch
(3) P x KP	P-Q5	(7) K-K2	P x Kt (Kt !) ch
(4) P-K3 ?	B-QKt5 ch	(8) K-K1	

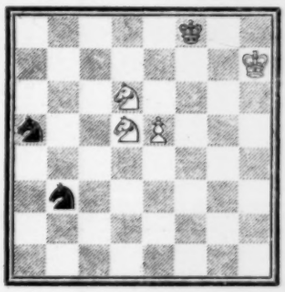
Unique in his pride of accomplishing what even the Queen cannot do, the Knight is the most romantic of all chessmen. He may well be an outsider and a lone wolf, yet his queer capers blend most harmoniously with everybody's else's movements. Even so, more than any of the others, the Kt is apt to spring a surprise.



In this position (Kunath - Frische, Berlin 1937), White had just played P-B7, and Black was about to resign when he thought of what seemed to him the saving grace.

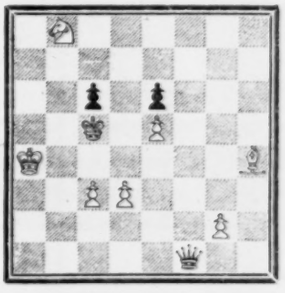
(1) — —	Kt-B5 ch	(4) K-Q7	Kt-Kt3 ch
(2) K-B6	Kt-Kt3	(5) K-Q8	Kt-B1
(3) K-Q6	Kt-B1 ch	(6) P-R7	K-Kt2

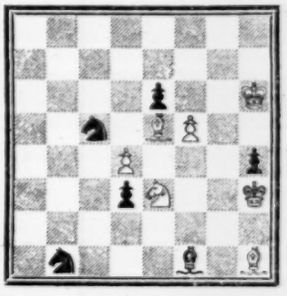
The game was soon abandoned as a draw (which, indeed, it is in this position). Yet, a little earlier White could still have won. How?



Here is a fairly simple study by P. Heuäcker, yet a most instructive example for the power of two Knights co-operating. White to move and win.

This study (by A. L. Kubbel) is not quite so easy. It seems incredible, yet it is a fact that, in no more than five moves, this agile Kt is going (or rather jumping) to catch the remote Queen, either on a black or a white square.





In this interesting study (by E. Zepler)—how could White threaten immediate Mate but for the nuisance of one of his own pawns? And how does his clever Kt force Black to remove the impediment? Actually, it is a Mate in 6 moves.

For the usual prizes, competitors are invited to provide correct solutions and, possibly, to add some personal experience of a particularly adventurous Kt. Entries by October 31.

REPORT ON COMPETITION No. 11

SOLUTIONS:

A:— (1) . . . K-B5, (2) B-Q3, K-K6, (3) B-B1, K-B7 (4) B-R3, K-Kt 6, (5) B-B5, K-B5, etc.

B:— (1) P-K7, B-Kt1, (2) P-K5, B x P, (3) B-Q7, B-Q3 ch (4) K-R4, B x P (5) B-K6 ch K-Kt2, (6) B-Q5, B-B8, (7) B-B4 B-R6, (8) B-K6, etc.

C:— (1) . . . B-Kt7, (2) B-Q2, B-B6, (3) B-R6, B-Kt2, etc.

D:— (1) B-Q6, B-R4, (2) B-Q3, B x P, (3) B-R6 ch, K-Kt1, (4) K-K7, B x B ch, (5) K x B, K-R1, (6) K-B7 and mates next move.

E:— (1) B-R6 ch, K-Kt1, (2) P-Kt7, K-B2, (3) P queens ch, K x Q, (4) K-K6, K-R1, (5) K-B7 and mates next move. (If 2) . . . P-K3 ch, (3) K-Q6, K-B2, (4) K-K5, K-Kt1, (5) K-B6, etc.

The fact that Troitzki was inadvertently robbed of his first "i" caused much amusing comment about the politics of our printers and whatever J. Stalin might have to say about it. A more substantial error appeared in the Freidl-Gaida position. Evidently (after Black's K-B5) White could have won by B-QB8, followed by B-QR6. This was detected by J. W. Cornforth, G. S. Fisher, M. Kaye, and J. M. Reid, and since they also provided correct solutions of the other positions (incl. the one by Kubbel which proved the stumbling block for more than a dozen competitors) it seems only fair that these four share the prizes with G. Abrahams who provided a delightful position (which I hope to use some time soon) as well as the interesting theory of the terms *fou* and *Lasdfer* being derived from the Arabic *alfil*. A. R. Cripps also detected the pretty win for Freidl, but failed to qualify for the lack of other solutions. More or less completely correct solutions were sent in by C. Allen, E. W. Beal, R. W. B. Clark, W. H. Cozens, D. M. Peach, M. Rumney, V. Russ.

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